edited by
Melvin J Lasky
& Frank Kermode

Encounter

4s $1

September 1966

27/3

The Disciple's Rebellion
Lewis Mumford

The Day Dr Knox Did It
Robert Penn Warren

Insignificant Elephants
W H Auden

The Road through Myton
Wallace Kaufman

Ecce Homo!
Konrad Lorenz

Jarrell & Others
Denis Donoghue

Ideas and the Drama
John Weightman

Letter to Tito
Mihajlo Mihajlov

Poems
George Seferis

Labour in Power
Alan Watkins

God, Theology and Love
Paul Blanshard

Miss MacIntosh, my darling
A S Byatt

PRODUCED 2003 E
ELECTRONIC REPRODUC ERWISE PROHIBITED

There's more to this jetliner than meets the eye.

It's easy on the ears.

There are many ways to describe the quietness in the BOAC VC10. But right now we're settling for a straight statement of fact.
When you fly in the BOAC VC10, it really is quiet. There's no special sealing. Or complicated baffle boards to disguise the jet noise. The jet noise simply isn't there, as a result of good design.
On the BOAC VC10 the four powerful Rolls-Royce jet engines are at the tail end, so all the jet noise gets carried away behind you, and you get left in quiet comfort.
You can fly in the BOAC VC10 to USA, Canada, S. America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, India, the Far East. And it costs no more than the ordinary airfare. Easy on the eye. Easy on the ear. That's the BOAC VC10.

BOAC TAKES GOOD CARE OF YOU

BOAC VC10

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Encounter

SEPTEMBER 1966
VOL. XXVII NO. 3

Edited by FRANK KERMODE *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

CORRESPONDING EDITOR (U.S.A.): STEPHEN SPENDER

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: *John Mander, John Gross, Anthony Hartley, Goronwy Rees.*
ASSISTANT EDITOR: *Margot Walmsley* EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: *Bryan Healing.*
BUSINESS MANAGER: *Derek S. Dyerson.* ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: *John Hall.*

Published monthly at 25 Haymarket London SW1. 4s. a copy (USA air $1. Canada 75c. India Rs. 2.35). Back numbers: 5s. ($1). Annual subscription: 50s: USA & Canada $8.50 (USA air $11.50): India Rs. 28. Subscription & Trade department: Rolls House Publishing Co. Ltd. Breams Buildings London EC4 (Holborn 5708). US & Canadian subscriptions: British Publications Inc. 30 East 60th Street New York NY 10022. US newsstand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc. 485 Fifth Avenue New York 17 (MU 7-2645). Second-class postage paid at New York, New York. *© 1966 by Encounter Ltd.*

THE ROAD THROUGH MYTON (*story*)	3	*Wallace Kaufman*
THE DISCIPLE'S REBELLION	11	*Lewis Mumford*
ECCE HOMO!	25	*Konrad Lorenz*
COLUMN	42	*R.*
THEATRE		
IDEAS AND THE DRAMA	46	*John Weightman*
POETRY		
INSIGNIFICANT ELEPHANTS	9	*W. H. Auden*
A SENSE OF DISTANCE	10	*Charles Tomlinson*
LANDSCAPE, NEAR PONTOISE	21	*Thomas Kinsella*
THE DAY DR. KNOX DID IT	22	*Robert Penn Warren*
POEMS	40	*George Seferis*
HEAD OF A SNOWDROP	87	*Patricia Beer*
NOTES & TOPICS		
LOOKING FOR THE ROAD	49	*Terence Prittie*
GOD, THEOLOGY & LOVE	51	*Paul Blanshard*
LABOUR IN POWER	56	*Alan Watkins*
BOOKS & WRITERS		
THE OBSESSION WITH AMORPHOUS MANKIND	63	*A. S. Byatt*
PENNY WORLDS	69	*Denis Donoghue*
GOULASCH	74	*Marcus Cunliffe*
POINTS OF THE COMPASS		
FROM ABIDJAN TO FORT LAMY	79	*Anthony Hartley*
EAST & WEST		
OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT TITO	88	*Mihajlo Mihajlov*
LETTERS	90	
AUTHORS	96	

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Barclays are deeply committed to BARCLAYCARD

why?

Not the least of our reasons is that money is our business—money in all its forms. And we know better than most that its most expensive and troublesome form is *cash*.

Cash is dangerous in large amounts and tedious in small. Of all the aspects of our trading life it is the most primitive. (Apart from being devalued, how does it differ from the exchange of beads for goats, and cowrie shells for wives?) Worst of all, cash is inefficient. It *can't* be right to need 8 million new bank notes every day.

Cash is not, though, inevitable. Some time in the future, sophisticated communities will grow out of the need to carry pocketsful of metal and paper tokens.

Every bank looks forward to that day. The cheque is a means to the end we all seek: so is *the credit transfer.* Now we in Barclays are taking another major step in the same direction.

BARCLAYCARD is a massive effort to reduce the use of cash. We started with a million of our own customers. Now we accept applications from any responsible adult. In a short time we hope that four million people will show their BARCLAYCARD, *sign the bill, and pay us* at the end of the month.

This enterprise is enormous, and rewards will *not come soon. But in years to come we shall be* able to claim that we pioneered in this country the general everyday use of credit instead of cash.

BARCLAYCARD, 20 MOORGATE, LONDON, E.C.2.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wallace Kaufman

The Road Through Myton

SAYING "Think it over, soldier," the evangelist let me out on the highway in Vernal, Utah, four hundred or so miles from Ogallala, Nebraska, where he picked me up. As I watched him drive off, I thought, "Yeah, I'll think it over—over and over and over. You're years too late, mister." And I remembered one summer night when I was ten and after months of secret praying in a weedy vacant lot in Brooklyn, I challenged God to answer me, give me a sign or lose me —me one of the most devout disciples he'd ever had, or so I fancied myself. Well, the next morning he had lost me, and since then a lot of other people have won—Schopenhauer, Shelley, Clarence Darrow, Will Durant, Nietzsche, Albert Einstein, and some I can't remember. What was next I never knew and at the time of this particular trip I didn't much care because I was trying not to think just then. Anyway, you see how many things I've tried and you can understand why I wasn't going to be won back by an evangelist, a fundamentalist following the tracks of Billy Graham to see that everybody who'd said yes to the big chief would stick to their promises after he'd pushed on.

But I shouldn't speak so harshly of that evangelist because before he picked me up I had stood in Ogallala no less than ten hours, long enough to see the sun set and rise again while probably three hundred Christian drivers whizzed by my humble thumb. Why the evangelist picked me up I don't know. I suppose he's a kind of salesman and salesmen, as every hitch-hiker knows, are pretty decent about giving rides. I might add most of them don't try to sell their product to you. (To this criticism, the evangelist, if I can do him the favour of arguing for him, would say, "You don't need money to buy what I'm selling.")

So after four hundred miles I was in the town of Vernal, Utah, which was not really a town, just a few buildings strung out along both sides of the highway. "Oh, for Chrissakes," I said to myself as I walked to the edge of the town, "here goes another ten hours." I wasn't really in a hurry. I still had a week's leave time in which to get back to my base in Los Angeles. The problem was finding something to think about while I stood around almost hurting from lack of a good sleep and sweating in my uniform (which was an airman's, not a soldier's as the evangelist thought).

The problem of boredom was temporarily put off by a stroke of luck in my environment. It just so happened that at this end of town there was a *Phillips 66* station and tied to a stake outside the proprietor's house in back was an old billy goat. To some people this wouldn't have been much of a diversion, but I have the proverbial soft spot for animals—maybe a result of growing up in Brooklyn with only a mutt dog for a pet. I always fancied me and that dog on a farm, but the closest I got to that was Central Park Zoo. In the absence of other animals I turned to insects for a spell, and to this day I am probably the leading expert on ant activity in pavement cracks and around old chewing gum.

I watched the goat for an hour, then was

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bored for an hour. I got a ride, but only a short one. Two steel-helmeted construction workers let me out in Roosevelt, some thirty miles along, without saying any more than "Where you going?", "Get in," and "This is where you get out." I said, "Thanks a lot," and hopped out, throwing my bag ahead of me just in case they had thought of driving off with it. The next ride was in back of a pick-up and just a measly five or six miles to a little fork-in-the-roads called Myton. I shouldn't have taken such a short ride to nowhere, but I would rather have been riding than standing and I didn't bother with long-range planning.

THE SKY had begun to cloud up when I was between Vernal and Roosevelt and by now it was grey and dirty. The bottoms of the clouds were uniformly flat and hanging close over the treeless land as far as I could see in any direction, they made me think the world was a vast room with an oppressively low ceiling. Just then I seemed to be the only person in the room. Right by the road on my side was a small shed which looked like it had been used for storing tools or feed. Across from me a narrow dirt road forked off the highway and disappeared over the horizon. About a quarter mile up that road was a big frame farmhouse. Besides a run-down, stucco store a half-mile or so ahead of me and a closed gas station the same distance behind, that was all there seemed to be in Myton—me and four buildings and every now and then a threatening sprinkle of rain—not even many cars passing through. I stuck my thumb out only five times in three hours.

When I thought I detected daylight deserting me, I heard someone yell. I looked up the dirt road and there was the kid. He was jogging towards me dressed in blue jeans and a flannel shirt—a tow-headed kid of about eight or nine, the all-American farm boy, just the kind you see in tooth hygiene posters when you're in school except this one had slightly buck teeth. He yelled again before he got across the highway. "Hey mister, what're you doin' here?"

I waited till he came across and I said, "What are you doing here?"

"That's my house," he said. "My pa owns this land, all of it, far as you can see."

"Well, is that so?" I said. I thought, next thing this kid would do would be to tell me I had to ask permission to be there.

"Yep. Are you goin' somewheres?" he asked with the very unashamed interest that only kids can have in strangers.

"Yeah, I'm waiting for a ride."

"Is somebody comin' for you?"

"I hope so, I don't intend to live here." I wanted him to beat it so I would have a better chance for a ride, but for some reason I didn't tell him point-blank to scram. Maybe I had been without anyone to talk to for too long. The evangelist had talked, but he talked *at* me not with me, and he only listened to see if I agreed or disagreed.

"Who's comin' for you?" the kid asked.

"Nobody particular, I just ask everybody who comes along."

"Where you goin'?"

"California."

"Whyn't you ask my pa for a ride? He'll take you to California. He's got a car an' a truck an' three tractors."

"Well, it's a little far for your pa to take me and I'll probably be getting a ride any time now." He looked disappointed as if I'd just told him his old man was really a helpless kid like himself. He hitched up his jeans (which immediately slipped down again) and looked at the sky. A strong wind was beginning to blow, driving widely scattered drops of rain with it. I felt a shiver go through me as one of the drops hit the back of my neck.

"What's *your* father do?" he asked me suspiciously, as if my father might have recently done him some harm.

I didn't like the way he put the question to me, like a bullying sergeant I knew back in Los Angeles. On top of that I was fed up with the way things in general were going. I thought for a moment, then I told him what I was too stubborn or cowardly to tell myself yet. I said, "You know what my father does? Well, he doesn't do anything, he's dead." Before he could reply I went on,

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

talking almost as much to myself as to the kid. "He was killed last week. How about that?" I listened to myself saying it—you know how when you've wanted to say something for a long time and finally say it, it's so familiar you don't even have to think about talking, you just listen. While I was talking aloud to the kid, inside me I was hearing two other voices. One said, "You bastard, you shit, shut up." The other said, "You tell him, that's right, give him Truth." Behind the phony rationalisation of that second voice I smiled dryly and watched the kid's face.

He asked, "Did somebody shoot him?"

"No, no, he was in a car crash," I said, and feeling somehow he'd gained the upper-hand, I retreated from the subject. I looked up the road. "Not too many cars come by here, do they?"

"Nope, d'ya want me to ask my father if he'll take you to California? We have an aunt in California."

"Nope, don't ask," I said, "I'll get a ride."

"No you won't."

"Why not?"

"You just won't."

He said it in such a confident and unbelligerent voice I was ready to believe him except that believing him wouldn't have helped me any. I looked up the road hopefully, and my hope wasn't in vain because a minute later a big semi-trailer truck appeared in the distance and came roaring towards us. As I stuck out my thumb I wished the kid wasn't there, but surely the driver would know he wasn't with me. In the end it didn't make any difference.

"He waved to you," the kid said. "How come he didn't stop?"

"I guess he had somewhere to go, or else he didn't have any room."

"You know what?" the kid said.

"What?"

"I wish *my* father was dead."

"Oh, you do. Why?" I felt psychologically *avant-garde* the way I didn't challenge him but probed beneath the surface.

"Because he won't get me a pony."

"Oh, why not?" I played along to make up for some of the bastardly things I'd said and to pass the time.

"He says we don't have the money. So I'm gonna buy him myself."

"How much will it cost?"

"About fifteen dollars."

"And how much you got now?"

"A dollar and fifty cents."

"Well, you still got some saving to do." I wanted to tell him he'd get it one day, but I'm no good at that sort of back-patting. It would have been lying anyway, and he didn't seem to need lies to give him confidence. I thought, "He probably knows right now he won't get that pony, like me when I was a kid saving for a set of electric trains."

"Are you in the Army?" he asked, looking at my cap.

"Nope, I'm in the Air Force."

"What's that?"

"That's where they have planes."

"How come *you're* not in a plane?"

I looked at the single chevron on my shoulder and explained as best I could, but he looked like I'd told him airplanes weren't real.

As if consoling me for my lowly rank (which with the inability to fly probably seemed like a form of punishment to him) he said, "Why don't you come home and have supper with us?"

"Well, I don't think that'd be a good idea. I don't even know you."

"I'm Raymie," he said, solving the problem just like that.

"Yeah, well I'm Ted, but I still don't think I could have supper with you. I mean your father and mother might not like you bringing a stranger."

"I know, I'll go and ask him. They'll be looking for me pretty soon anyway." I tried to tell him not to ask but he said, "You wait here," and started to run away, beating his thigh with his hand as if it were a horse.

"Hey," I yelled, just as he got to the other side of the highway. He stopped. "C'mere a minute." He galloped back and I took a dollar bill out of my pocket and gave it to him. "Forget about supper," I said, "but, uh,

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

add this to the money you're saving for that pony."

"Great, thanks," was all he said before he galloped off again. It was all I wanted him to say. I hate a lot of fuss about giving and receiving. "Don't give unless you mean it and don't take unless you can use it; be thankful but don't be noisy; it's what you do with the gift, not what you say about it that counts." That's my give-and-take philosophy in brief.

IT WAS almost dark when I saw the kid disappear around one side of the house. The wind was picking up and so was the rain. I was beginning to shiver even with my trench-coat on. It was still keeping off the rain, but the government stuff wasn't all that efficient, and I knew if the weather got serious, I'd be soaked in a few minutes. If it didn't get serious, but just kept up in little sprinkles like it had been doing, I would have to wait an hour or two before the water got through.

My legs were tired from standing by the road and walking through a hundred towns between New York and Myton. In Brooklyn I could have borrowed the money for the bus from one of my brothers or my Aunt Carol whose husband owned a grocery store, but I didn't want to be in debt to any of them, and I didn't fancy being cooped up in a bus either. The four days I'd spent back home had been like a sentence in a prison where not only what you do is regulated but where your fellow prisoners and the guards are only permitted to say certain things to you. It was the same everywhere—at the funeral parlour, next door, in the candy store—as soon as they saw you they said, "Gee Ted, I was sorry to hear about your father." It was even like that when I got out one night and went to a bar. "That was terrible about your father, Ted. Sorry to hear it." What the hell can you say in return to show you're not just a formula. It got so every time someone opened his mouth I said to myself, "Yeah, it *was* terrible, wasn't it? I'm sorry too." You can't believe in death when everybody is making it out to be something it isn't.

I wished they all could have been there in Myton and heard the kid say, "I wish *my* father was dead," and "Did somebody shoot him?" Maybe they wouldn't talk so automatically about death. When my old man was alive no one heard anything about him. When he died they talked like he had been a saint in disguise. Didn't they ever hear my father curse when he was drunk? Didn't they know he threw my brother Larry into the street because he fell in love with a Catholic? Don't they know I joined the Air Force to get out of his house? The only thing he was ever good at was being a machinist, but of course nobody said peep about that. Why the hell does death make everything so good? You'd think God gave us death like a big eraser to wipe the slate clean so someone could fill in the space with *He Was A Good Man.*

IT WAS DARK now and there were lights on in the farmhouse. I guessed the kid's old man had come in from wherever he'd been working, had milked the cows and was now washing up for dinner. I wondered what the kid would tell him about me. I could picture him saying, "Pa, there's a pilot standing on the road down there and he wants to have supper with us. Can I ask him to come?" That would be just about what he'd say, and it wouldn't have been all lies because I could have used a warm room and a little food just then. But I couldn't do with any family scene, especially not with me as a guest being asked questions which would undoubtedly lead to why I was where I was.

Some rain worked through my trench-coat and I began to shiver steadily. There hadn't been any traffic for almost a half-hour, so I decided to hole up for a while in the old shed and see if the rain wouldn't stop. It was close enough to the road so I might even be able to hear something coming soon enough to run back and stick my thumb out. Another thought occurred to me: if by some freak chance that kid did come to invite me to supper, he wouldn't see me and would think I'd gotten a ride.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Inside it was damp but not too wet to sit down, and it was strangely quiet like a small pocket in the wind. The roof wasn't perfectly waterproof, but it was a damn sight better than my trench-coat. In a half-dozen places drops continually gathered on the ceiling, swelled and fell. I couldn't see them but heard them dropping on the dirt floor, and at one time or another I located each one with the top of my head or the back of my neck. Nevertheless, the sudden change from outdoors gave me the illusion of being warm, and I knew being tired was an outright fact. I propped myself in a corner where some kind of storage bin met the back wall and closed my eyes. I suppose you'd say I was day-dreaming—not far enough into sleep to be unconscious of the sound of wind and rain and the feeling of a slight chill in my feet, yet not in control of my thoughts—a spectator, more or less. I was making up speeches about death, how it was only a little thing, an accident. I got sarcastic and standing up on the kneeling pad before my father's open coffin, surrounded by jungles of flowers, I told black-suited relatives, "Death's common, ordinary and boring. It's nothing to make a party over. It's an honest mistake like tripping over someone's foot. My father didn't invent it, he didn't say, 'I'm going to try something brave and new, I'm going to die.' No, he just died. It happens to everybody—kings, presidents, popes, and dogs and worms. And *you* and *you* and *you*." I was enjoying my revenge when I realised I heard something coming down the road. I debated should I get up and try or should I settle down for the night. The chill in my feet hadn't worked its way up my legs yet, and my partial success at sleep had made me careless. "Go on, buddy," I thought, to the oncoming driver. "What the hell do I care."

It must have been a truck with its brights on because the right headlight momentarily probed inside my shack. Then I heard him roar by, making a little thud when he must have hit a hole in the road. "That's right, tear up the road, you bastard. You don't pay." And I dozed off again thinking about other parts of the country I'd just come through, warmer, drier places with quicker rides. I was even willing to argue with the evangelist (or listen to his spiel) if he'd give me another ride.

The next thing I knew was hearing voices. I could have been asleep five minutes or an hour. Somehow I knew it wasn't any longer. At first I didn't know what the voices were saying, so I thought it was probably best if I just stayed put. In a moment it became clear there was only one voice, a man's, yelling "Raymie!" Except that it was a man's voice, it was like my old lady's when she called for me—slightly tired and annoyed. First off I thought, "Oh, Christ stay out of sight. You don't want to volunteer for trouble." Then I realised the kid had probably been out looking for me. Straightening myself up and sneaking up the road a ways before I came out of the grass (so he wouldn't know I'd been in the shed), I turned towards him. I could tell by his flashlight he was almost at the fork.

"Hello," I yelled.

"Hello."

I didn't know what to say next. I kept quiet, walking towards him.

"Who's that?" he asked, flashing his light on me.

My name wasn't going to mean much nor was my rank and serial number, so I stalled, saying something even more stupid. "It's me, I mean I was trying to get a ride."

"Where's my boy?"

"The blond kid?" I asked, knowing it couldn't be any other.

"Yes, I sent him out here to find you."

"I was walking into town. I haven't seen him," I said matter-of-factly, the way I used to talk to the cops in Brooklyn when they asked who broke such and such window or street-light. But I was thinking I had not only missed a supper but I was now in trouble for missing it.

"Well then, he's not up that way," he said and shined his light the way I had come. "Maybe he's gone down towards the store. C'mon this way." Walking a little in back of him, I could see he was a big man, not at all blond or smooth-featured like the kid. He

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shambled a little as he walked and he seemed at ease and only slightly puzzled, like a mechanic hunting in his tool-box for a missing tool.

I didn't have time to think why I joined him or what he was going to say about me. We had only gone a few steps when his light picked out the kid lying in the grass beside the highway. He was on his stomach with his face to one side and his arms raised and bent at the elbows so one hand was next to but not touching each ear. He looked like a child taking a nap on a hot afternoon.

Neither of us rushed to him. As if preparing ourselves, we paused an instant. His father didn't move him, he could see enough of his face as he lay. In the light of the flashlight I saw an open eye, but unmoving and glassy. While his father knelt in the grass, putting his huge square face close to the boy's and calling him softly, I saw something else. The legs in their blue jeans went off at an angle from his back and he seemed caved in just above the hips like the crease a light metal pipe makes if you bend it too far. While I waited nervously for his father to test every doubt, I thought this was how my own father would be, matter-of-fact, quiet and thorough as he was with his work.

The farmer handed me the light and put an arm under each of his son's armpits, lifting his shoulders off the ground slowly but effortlessly. It wasn't until he had raised the body almost on to its feet that I realised he was too stunned to know the grotesque spectacle he made. Stuffing the flashlight in my trench-coat pocket, I picked up the kid's feet. His body hung limp between us and through its unresisting bone and muscle I felt his father shaking with tears I could not hear. "Don't cry out loud," I thought. "Don't let it get you." I knew if he cried aloud I would too, and I felt I had no right to cry. He pulled one arm free and hooked it beneath his son's knees and gently took him from me.

With the flashlight I lit the way to the house, a walk we made in complete silence except for the father once saying, "How?" He didn't really seem to be asking me, and I wasn't sure *how* myself, so I didn't tell him about the truck and the noise I had guessed was a hole in the road. It didn't even seem to matter that it was hit-and-run.

AT THE HOUSE I opened the door for them and heard his wife's question become a gasp and then crying. She took the body as if it belonged solely to her and carried it into the house where I could not see. I was still outside the door and the father was in the doorway with his back to me. He watched his wife go, and when he turned he seemed composed. "Come in," he said, seeing the rain running down my face, but when I stepped inside he didn't shut the door or take me to another room. Behind him I saw a table with places set for three. There were pots on the stove and I could smell food at the point of burning. He reached in the pocket of his coveralls and handed me a dollar bill. "I sent him to give this back to you. We don't like taking money from strangers." I took the bill and folded it slowly, not knowing what to do next.

After a few seconds of unbearable silence I said as sincerely as I could, "I'm sorry he didn't get his pony." I thought that would echo something in this man's own mind and show him I was not cold and detached nor a complete stranger, that I shared some small knowledge of his son.

I watched his face hopefully. He looked at me for just a second as if to see if I were watching. Then his eyes dropped and fixed on a hand that was thickened with yellow callous and whose fingernails were ridged and grey. The hand opened and closed beneath his gaze as if exhibiting itself. "He might even have hit the kid with that hand," I thought, remembering with unusual clarity how my own father's blows had felt. I looked at his face again and his mouth opened to say something. At the same time the muscles in his lips and chin twitched uncontrollably. Very deliberately and slowly he said, "He lied, he lied. Raymie was a liar." And through sobs, almost chanting, he told me, "He has a pony in the north pasture, the one by the stock pond."

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

W. H. Auden

Insignificant Elephants

Our Lord Jesus Christ, although he was the greatest, was made the most Insignificant of All the Elephants. (THE BESTIARY)

Talented creatures, on the defensive because
Glory, Real Estate, Girls are not in Virtue's gift,
Translate into verse or prose,

Do equally well in tragic and comic parts,
Give story-tellers the nudge to invent that cooks
Get from slightly tainted meat.

But a *Hugh of Lincoln* or a *Peter Claver*
Are only game for reporters, news, like Auschwitz,
Dickens could not have made up

Nor Halley have predicted: genetic typos
Bring forth infant prodigies, imbeciles, midgets,
But no prime-numbers, no saints.

Nor would a snapshot reveal a halo: they hide
Their incandescence, like tasty moths who mimic
Unpalatable cousins.

Wild converts, at sea in a collapsing culture,
Concocted one or two viable folk-tales—*George*
Cuts a dash with his Dragon—

But a deal of bosh, magical hanky-panky
Where spurious cults could mushroom: there never was
A *Catherine* with a Wheel,

Nor a *Barbara* to bless the Artillery,
Nor an *Uncumber* for English wives to invoke
Against troublesome husbands.

Anecdotes, even from those dark years, have reached us
That are odd enough to be true:—*Perpetua*,
With a beastly end to face,

Trying to convince, *Papa, if that is a jug,*
I am a Christian, and dreaming of a shepherd
Who consoled her with cream-cheese.

With all our flair for research, we are still non-plussed:
What shifted members of our species to become
Insignificant elephants?

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A hard life, often a hard death, and side-effects
Which a humanist finds hard to stomach, are signs
That divulge nothing. A trait

Which might cannot be checked on: all who met them speak
Of a joy which made their own conveniences
Mournfulness and a bad smell.

If their hunch was not mistaken, it would explain
Why there is something fishy about a high style
And the characters it suits,

Why we add the embarrassing prefix *Super*—
To a natural life that nothing prevents us
Living except our natures.

A Sense of Distance

The door is shut.
The red rider
no longer crosses the canyon floor
under a thousand feet of air.

The glance that fell
on him, is shafting
a deeper well:
the boughs of the oak are roaring
inside the acorn shell.

The hoofbeats—silent, then—
are sounding now
that ride
dividing a later distance.

For I am in England,
and the mind's embrace
catches-up this English
and that horizonless desert space
into its own, and the three there
concentrically fill a single sphere.

And it seems as if a wind
had flung wide a door
above an abyss, where all
the kingdoms of possibility shone
like sandgrains crystalline in the mind's own sun.

Charles Tomlinson

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Disciple's Rebellion

A Memoir of Patrick Geddes — By LEWIS MUMFORD

I DID NOT actually meet Patrick Geddes in the flesh until the spring of 1923. But there were many premonitory tremors and quakes before we met; for our correspondence became more frequent, and as early as 1919 he had suggested that I collaborate with him in writing a book about contemporary politics: one of a dozen stimulating suggestions that never came to fruition either in my mind or in his.

In 1920, when I was in London at Le Play House as acting editor of the *Sociological Review,* he had cabled Victor Branford of his imminent arrival. His coming, in a matter of days, filled everyone there, from Victor Branford down, with eager trepidation and anticipatory anguish. But his work in Palestine, where he was already employed on various planning schemes by the Zionist organisation—it was he who selected Mount Scopas as the site for the University and, with Frank Mears, drew up the original plan for it—kept him in Jerusalem. Even before that I had been tempted by his offer to take me on as his assistant at the University of Bombay, where he had become professor of Civics and Sociology; but in the end, the thought of America and the possibility of losing my future wife by my absence kept me from joining him.

At long last Geddes decided to come to the United States, a place he had not visited for a quarter of a century. He had left behind, at least in the mind of my old *Dial* friend, Robert Morss Lovett, the memory of his brilliant talks at the University of Chicago. In fact, everyone who knew Geddes in his prime, as did Auguste Hamon (the French biographer of Bernard Shaw), was wont to couple him with Shaw for his original sallies, his satiric wit, and his quick, sometimes savage, repartee. Verbally he was the master of the disconcertingly unexpected: so one can easily guess why the gentlemanly Sir Edward Lutyens, finding his imperially monumental plan for New Delhi severely criticised by this unconventional professorial nobody, turned on him with a furious contempt, as Lutyens' biographer disclosed.

Now Geddes, full of years and experience, felt drawn back to America, partly in the spirit that had governed so much of his life, that of the wandering scholar seeking fresh intellectual contacts, partly to chat with old academic friends, partly stirred perhaps by the hope that his young American disciple would turn out to be the person who, as "collaborator," would manage to transform the accumulated seekings and findings of a lifetime into an orderly, readable form. Then, too, he doubtless looked forward to the refreshment of a new scene and a new *Ecole Libre,* though the almost deserted

THROUGHOUT *Lewis Mumford's work there appears the name of a "secret hero"—the neglected, almost forgotten Scots scientist, philosopher, city planner, Patrick Geddes (1854–1932). In fact, in his* The Condition of Man *(1944), Mumford wrote: "What he was, what he stood for, what he pointed towards will become increasingly important as the world grows to understand both his philosophy and his example.... Such a man has worshipped the burning bush and beheld from afar the Promised Land.... No man in our time has shown a higher degree of intensity: an intellectual energy that matched Leonardo's all-devouring curiosity, a practical grasp that organised masques and planned cities, a sexual vitality, continent but volcanic, that recalls the pan-like figures of Victor Hugo or Auguste Rodin.... That example is a starting-point for our future world culture...." Among Lewis Mumford's other books are* Sticks and Stones *(1924),* The Golden Day *(1926),* Technics and Civilisation *(1934), and* The City in History *(1961).*

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

purlieus of the New School for Social Research (then on London Terrace in West 23rd Street, with residential quarters backing it on 24th Street) could hardly be called a sufficient source of refreshment, that hot and humid summer, in spite of an ailanthus-shaded garden stretched between the two rows.

My friend Dorothy Loch, Branford's part-time secretary, had warned Sophia and me about how we should take him. "Geddes must be accepted," she wrote, "as a good Catholic accepts grief, with an open heart and no reserves, *if* he is to benefit those whom his presence scourges. He will brook no reserves.... I have lost much of Geddes from my flights, fears, and reserves. Stop dealing with him when you (or if you) must, but when you may, go with him fully. Don't forget he is an old man and lonely, and the very-most-vicious-cave-barbarian when sad, angered, or thwarted."

Dorothy, in the last characterisation, was perhaps remembering the terrible moment when she had interrupted a conversation between Geddes and Branford in order to find a much-needed ash-tray. Geddes had seared her with scorn for this housewifely respect for ashes and this philistine indifference to the mood of thought, which must not be broken by concern for material arrangements. Her advice was excellent; but it did not make for easier intercourse, nor did it prevent reserves, frustrations, and repeated flights. But in the matter of the ash-tray incident I can't resist adding that Geddes had the backing of Emerson, who noted in his Journal (1861): "The vice in manners is disproportion. 'Tis right that the hearth be swept and the lamps lighted, but never interrupt conversation, or so much as pass between the faces of the inmates, to adjust these things."

IN THE MONTHS before I had tried at Geddes' suggestion to arrange a full-fledged lecture tour for him, not realising how impossible this was in the late spring season or summer: but even in May distant lectures in the Midwest, at fifty dollars a lecture, with expenses, did not attract Geddes: so it all simmered down to a course of specially announced lectures at the New School, and a few dashes to other places; to Washington for a social workers' conference, to Worcester to see his old friend, Stanley Hall, to Cambridge to lecture for the landscape architecture students and compare notes with George Sarton, or—for he never lost touch with biological research—to Woods Hole, for a week with his scientific colleagues.

My first glimpse of Geddes was at the White Star pier near 23rd Street, on the other side of the customs' barrier: a little, narrow-shouldered man, frail but wiry, with a flowing, gesticulating beard and a head of flaring reddish-grey hair, parted in the middle: hot and impatient that warm morning, vexed that I had not got a ticket to take me past the customs' barrier, talking in a rapid stream whose key sounds were muffled by the grey thicket of moustache and beard. To my still adolescent horror I realised, as he turned his head, that he wore no necktie under his beard. I feared it might be his regular costume; but discovered later that in the haste of a belated packing that morning he had dumped all his neckties into his bag before he realised that he had not put one on. Still Geddes' head, with its great shock of parted hair and the bulging crown of the brain case, was reassuring. Even at first glance he seemed thought itself incarnate.

Somehow, our companionship got off on the wrong foot; and we never managed to fall in step afterwards, though we tried more than once to begin all over again. Geddes commanded all my time that summer, for he had sent me in advance two hundred dollars, so that I might devote myself to him during the next few months, instead of devilling at reviews and articles for *The Freeman* or *The New Republic*. But neither of us knew how to make use of our opportunity. Partly, no doubt, this was due to my awkwardness and ineptitude; but also it came from his never taking the time to get acquainted, in the way that Branford had tactfully done in 1920 on my first visit to him in Hampshire: for Geddes started out by making a direct demand on me I was unprepared emotionally to fill, so that I put up my guard and never thereafter fully lowered it. On the day after his arrival, in the basement lounge of the New School, which gave out on the garden, he took me squarely by the shoulders and gazed at me intently. "You are the image of my poor dead lad," he said to me with tears welling in his eyes, "and almost the same age he was when he was killed in France. You must be another son to me, Lewis, and we will get on with our work together."

THERE WAS BOTH grief and desperation in this appeal: both too violent, too urgent for me to handle. The abruptness of it, the sudden overflow, almost unmanned me, and my response to it was altogether inadequate, not so much from shallowness of feeling as from honesty. For I knew enough of his son Alisdair, through Branford's memoir and other people's memories of him, to know that there was no essential likeness between us, either in temperament or in background, in mode of life or in potentiality. If Alisdair's schooling, thanks to Geddes' theory that he could provide a better education at home than anyone could get at school, had

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been more irregular than mine, he was inured to a far more varied and adventurous kind of life, for he had shipped for a cruise on a fishing boat, had tramped with a fiddle through Europe, making friends with simple people through his music, and had served as a balloon observer in the War, before a chance shell, dropping behind the lines when he was off duty, killed him.

Though Alisdair had indeed served as P.G.'s assistant in arranging his town planning exhibitions, he definitely had a mind and will of his own: so that the father's hopes of making him a docile junior partner, who would carry through his hundred unfulfilled projects and tasks, were unfounded. Those who knew both father and son realised that in this respect the imperious old man was wilfully dreaming. He had not actually taken Alisdair's measure any more than, at the moment of paternal adoption, he was taking mine; for he even insisted on finding a wholly spurious physical likeness between us. The pathos of that fearful confession and adoption was not lost on me at the time; nor have I ever recalled that moment without a shrinking within over my own stilted response.

The final effect of this encounter was unfortunately to cover over and freeze up some of the natural warmth I felt towards him. Yet in his need to falsify our relations and warp them in accordance with his own subjective demands, he also gave me a clue to a certain blind wilfulness that in some degree, and often at the most inopportune moments, had undermined not a little of his own work. But the lesson of that encounter carried into my own life: for when I was faced with a similar grief I was careful not to seek from my students, even by an indirect appeal, the response I would no longer get from my son.

FROM THE BEGINNING our collaboration proved abortive, in fact it never reached the initial stage of conception: yet my sense of Patrick Geddes' greatness survived the whole summer I spent in his company, and if my criticisms of this or that aspect of his thought seem captious, or my admiration stinted, I beg the reader to correct that impression by this broader admission. Much of what I must say about Geddes applies equally, I find, to not a few other men of genius I have known: to Frank Lloyd Wright, for one, and to Adelbert Ames. For in one way or another one must pay for their extraordinary gifts: the very self-absorption that sustains their work, along with a godlike self-confidence, corrodes normal social relations.

Genius, just because of its originality, tends to be self-isolating; and the less its departures are understood and accepted, the more self-protectively inviolable becomes the resulting solitude, and the more difficult it is to overcome the solecisms that result from this isolation. My experience with Adelbert Ames, in full maturity, parallels my relations with Geddes.

Back in the 'thirties at Dartmouth, when his pioneering researches in optics were taking shape, Ames had demonstrated to me some of his ingenious experiments that showed, conclusively I believe, that pure sensations do not register automatically, by a reaction similar to the chemical changes in a photo-sensitive film; that every sensation is a perception which draws on the past experience and the present or prospective purposes of the organism. Whatever the physical conditions, they register only through interpretation, and through the total response of the whole organism. Value and purpose play as great a part in forming the "objective world" as number and sensation. All these abstractions are refined products of human history, not aboriginal components. This interpretation rested on brilliant experimental demonstrations that compelled accord and filled me with admiration. Having been trained as an artist, not a scientist, he could give science a dimension that its own premises had denied it: reference to the whole human being with his "valueful purposes."

After the war, when I lived in Hanover for a few years, I saw much of Ames, and at that moment he wanted desperately the help of someone who would put his observations and theories into viable literary form: so more than once he tentatively suggested that I might join him in this task. But by this time, Ames had worked his own interpretation into a kind of solipsism: since he could produce illusions at will under experimental conditions, the "external" world had come to seem an illusion, wholly dependent upon the observer. Reality, no less than beauty, seemed to him to lie in the eyes of the beholder. The very exquisite shapes of his experiments kept him from realising that the apparent privacy of each person's perceptions resulted from the abstraction of the experiment itself, for by isolating the eye—and usually a single eye at that—he prevented the whole organism, with its total past and its total response, from coming into active operation as it normally would.

When I tentatively broached some of my doubts to Ames, he shrank back into his private shell: the collaboration he begged for did not in fact allow for any serious criticism and rectification. Though I brought up the matter more than once, he never invited me to go through his series of experiments a second time. Despite

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our underlying agreement, he was not prepared, I understood, to examine my criticism: the criticism that might have helped him should have come at a far earlier stage. Now it was necessary for him to go it alone, or at least accept aid only from those who would take his findings unreservedly. So it had been earlier with Geddes.

I USED to come to Geddes at the New School before ten o'clock in the morning, and would leave at four or five to rejoin Sophia at *The Dial* for a later dinner, myself usually in a stage of fatigue approaching exhaustion; for this Ancient, who lived, like the ultimate creatures in Shaw's *Back to Methuselah*—a play published that year—in a vortex of thought, had enough energy to tire out "fifty fast-writing youths" like myself, even if the strain of listening so long to only half-caught sentences was not enough by itself to drain one's vitality. But somehow this daily intercourse did not bring us closer; and I was never alert enough at the end of the day to put down even a fragment of all that he had told me and taught me, though I had had the ambition, before we met, of using this period to gather materials for his biography. He did, of course, tell me much about his past, as he might tell any chance acquaintance in a railroad train or a restaurant; but he was averse to making any systematic effort to review his life: "Time for that later," he would say, and by later he really meant after he had died.

To show how closely John Dewey's educational influence had paralleled his own doctrines, I once took him to my friend Caroline Pratt's City and Country School in West 12th Street. I had expected him to be enthusiastic about a plan of education that shied away from abstractions and verbalisms, even delaying reading till need and interest turned the pupil towards it: a plan, moreover, that sent groups of children out to various parts of the city to explore its daily life and recapture it in paintings, blocks, and stories. Was this not Geddes' Regional Survey in education? To my surprise he fastened, instead, upon what he considered a radical weakness—the absence of any first-hand contact with nature, in plants, animals, gardens, or even museums; and made such swift scarifying criticisms that after this I hardly dared to introduce him to any of my other friends. Fortunately, his contact with my fellow-members of the Regional Planning Association of America, at one long week-end at the Hudson Guild Farm, proved memorable: we all retain a picture of him, sitting cross-legged, like an Indian guru, under a great oak that almost turned, under the spell of his stories, into a banyan tree, telling us about his town-planning in India—and how as "Rajah for a day" he had banished the plague from Indore.

Somehow, it is symptomatic of the strain and tension that existed between us that, after promising to spend a whole Sunday with my wife and me in our little apartment on Brooklyn Heights, visiting our home for the first time, he entirely forgot the engagement and never even phoned. Characteristically, he was always forgetting engagements, or making two or three for the same hour: but he and I both realised that this particular oversight, on a day when he had nothing else on his calendar, was a Freudian slip. I was annoyed, too, that the one time we visited the American Museum of Natural History together, it was for the sake of two young sons of a chance acquaintance he had met at a dinner party, that we went there, not for my sake. Had I given up a summer of my own time, just to take the leavings of his days? As you see, there were two demanding, self-absorbed egos to reckon with.

Finally, by the middle of July, I stayed away and wrote him a letter, protesting that we had never met, and that he was talking to someone who did not really exist. In his reply he rose to the occasion, as he so often did at critical moments, with overwhelming insight and magnanimity: not angry, but sorry over his own apparent failure to take me in; realising "only too sadly" the gap between our generations, his heady with the hopes of endless progress through science, technics, and education: mine war-shocked, disillusioned, discouraged, prematurely, perhaps, but in fact unconsciously anticipating the even more formidable barbarisms that were to follow. At the end he emphasised his interest in my development—"as no mere exponent of mine." How that letter reawakened my love and admiration!

WHEN WE CAME TOGETHER we had one illuminating, almost ecstatic day together, which I recorded in my notes. But then, alas!, he fell back once more into the old soliloquy, and repeated once more the old irrelevant demands, wanting me to take over this or that half-finished theme as a "legacy" from his "mingled heaps," ideas he knew in his heart that he would never put together in any viable form no matter how long he might live. As the moment for his departure came nearer, our relations got even worse: for he felt obliged to use these last weeks in drilling me, yes, drilling me, in the elements of his systematic graphs and diagrams. That, from the fierce opponent of drill! I kept asking for the living kernel of his wisdom and he insisted that I should swallow a heap of husks.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Though I tried hard for a while to treat the latter as food, I could not deceive myself. He himself had taught me the difference.

FOR ALL THIS, that summer had many good moments, brief but memorable. Though my direct contact with Geddes was confined to such a short period, nothing that he had written or correlated in graphs had an influence on my thinking nearly as profound as he in his own person had on my life. Among books, Plato's *Republic,* Emerson's *Essays,* Whitman's *Democratic Vistas,* Ruskin's *Munera Pulveris,* Zimmern's *The Greek Commonwealth,* Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World,* to mention only a handful, left a deeper impression than any single work of Geddes': but the impact of his person shook my life to the core.

As with Branford, the most impressive thing about Geddes, even at sixty-nine, was the sense he conveyed of what it is to be fully alive, alive in every pore, at every moment, in every dimension: so that it was not a surprise to me, though it was a scandal to some of his friends, to find him taking as his second wife, at seventy-three, a woman considerably younger. He was seeking something more, I have reason to believe, than mere companionship and care. And it was by this magnificent aliveness that Geddes towered above those around him. Gladys Mayer was right: Blake would have understood Geddes, but not Bentham; for even Geddes' old-fashioned Victorian rationalism—and he had not a little of that—was too impassioned to satisfy its classic later exponents.

Though it was difficult to refer this quality in the man to his visible designs or published work, I still do not regret that I used Geddes in person as the final symbol of renewal in *The Condition of Man.* Only in Albert Schweitzer did I find a comparable fulfilment of the transformation that this book affirmed and demanded. "I and mine do not convince by arguments: we convince by our presence." If Geddes had only accepted that dictum of Walt Whitman's more fully he might have conserved for better uses some of the time he actually frittered away in his endless graphic demonstrations and his arguments. His presence was what counted; and if there had been longer periods of silence, it might have counted more.

FOR A MAN who relied so heavily on the spoken word, Geddes was guilty all his life of a singular oversight: he had never mastered the art of making himself audible either on the platform or at closer quarters. He spoke with a fine Edinburgh diction, perhaps the clearest and purest English that is spoken anywhere in educated circles outside Dublin. But he never realised that his beard muffled every sound, and that he couldn't be followed, even if one was sitting close by, without the greatest difficulty; while on walks, when he talked in profile, whole paragraphs and chapters were lost on the air. Everyone complained of this obstacle: yet no one apparently had dared to bring it to Geddes' attention.

I would not say that there was anything wilful in this: the sound of one's voice is so much a part of one that few people have the faintest notion of their own speech till a tape-recorder, to their consternation, plays it back; and Geddes came before the day of tape-recorders. Certainly there were difficulties enough in following his agile thoughts without this extra handicap. Perhaps the explanation is that he shared his beloved Carlyle's contempt for mere verbalism; but if so, no one except Carlyle ever put that contempt in so many words—or made so little effort to see that those words, when uttered, should be effective. Not heeding my warning the editors of the *Survey Graphic* hired a steno-typist to take down Geddes' New School lectures: but the weird product of that effort, though it finally after much re-writing got into print, exacerbated both Geddes and Paul Kellogg, the editor: it certainly didn't justify the expense.

DESPITE all that happened, or failed to happen, that summer I never lost my direct sense of Geddes' greatness: though it was true that the very intensity of his vitality, its exorbitance, made relentless demands upon those about him. Even the New School itself, under the shrewdest of Directors, Alvin Johnson, found it impossible to contain this volcanic personality. Johnson, I should explain, had rather grudgingly offered Geddes the temporary use of a guest room, till he should find more permanent quarters; but since his bedroom would remain vacant, Geddes saw no reason why he should leave it: he was quite content with the house and the rear garden and Dr. Harry Dana's companionship, and had no mind to change them for a less congenial settlement house or a hotel.

So Geddes not merely stayed on, but took possession of the academic quarters of the school, room by room, opening up the bales of charts and diagrams he had sent over in advance, and spreading out his papers. For Geddes loved to work on large tables—he said this was the secret of aristocratic mastery—and here he had as great a space to work in as in Edinburgh's Outlook Tower. In short, Johnson found that he had a scientific Bartleby on his

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hands, as loquacious as Bartleby was silent, but just as difficult to dislodge. Yet with all this paraphernalia of preparation, nothing came of Geddes' private exhibition of his graphs: it was mere gymnastic. The unformed theses, the unwritten books, remained unformed and unwritten.

It would be flattering to think that Geddes had brought these graphs and charts over for my special benefit: but the truth is that they were a standard part of his travel equipment, like the cabinet of medicines an invalid dare not leave behind, even if he never touches one. But since I was present, Geddes took advantage of the opportunity; and it was in one of these rooms, hung with charts, piled with memoranda, that my sense of frustration came to a climax, just a few days before Geddes sailed.

I still remember the feeling of rebellious humiliation in my breast—I was then almost twenty-eight—when he demanded, while he was busy elsewhere, that I spend the morning setting down on the blackboard, one after another, all the graphs and charts of his that I had mastered, including not a few that I rejected entirely. He made me feel as if I were back in elementary school again: but I had lost my old docility, and though I went through this exercise grimly, and did it thoroughly enough to earn his approval on his return, I never felt further from him than at that hour. This was the complete antithesis of the bold, challenging, insurgent, vitalising mind that I had been drawn to: as autocratic, as tyrannously Teutonic, as that of Carlyle, whom, as a student in London, he had admired. Secretly I looked forward, as reward for this final submission, to at least one day of his undivided attention; but it never came.

THE LAST EVENING P.G. was in New York—he was to sail at midnight—he had made an engagement to have dinner with Lillian Wald and the sisters Lewisohn, as I remember; and he left to me the dreary task of packing his bags and papers—those heaps of clothes, those middens of notes and charts, those shelves of new books! An English artist, Stephen Haweis, who had long been influenced by Geddes, dropped in for a last chat, and he too was disappointed at finding the Master absent. Years later Haweis recalled to me the remark I had made in the midst of my packing: that it was like putting the contents of Vesuvius back into the crater after an eruption.

By the time eleven o'clock came, I was tired, and too sick at heart to retain the reproachful fury I had felt earlier in the evening. When Geddes came back, I found a taxi and put his bags into it, but I refused to accompany him the few blocks to the pier. For a moment, he began to protest and urge me; but he must have sensed my bitter disappointment; for he let me go. We shook hands hastily on the sidewalk and the taxi rolled off. Though I was with him for a brief period later on, and though we corresponded steadily up to the month of his death, this parting was really a final one.

THE LAST TIME I met Geddes was at the end of the summer of 1925, on my way back from Geneva, where, at Alfred Zimmern's school, I had given the lectures on American literature that went into *The Golden Day*. That was my first opportunity to visit Edinburgh and behold the city with which he had so long been identified. This time Geddes and I lived under the same roof at the Outlook Tower, and I slept on an improvised cot amid bookcases and boxes of notes in the Library. Edinburgh and the Outlook Tower at the crest of Castle Hill—alone with the Master himself! My adolescent dream had come true, but with the fingermarks of reality, as usual, smudging the shining surface.

The dark craggy outlines of the old city, with its towering stone tenements and its pinnacled churches, the dank murky atmosphere in the old closes, the patent sordor and the wild gleams of beauty, mingling like the foul words that might stream forth from the fresh, lovely faces of the nubile slum girls, the surly puritanic note of John Knox juxtaposed, so to say, to the defiant erotic vitality of Mary Hamilton, the King's mistress—all this left an impression far more ineffaceable than my meagre breakfast talks with Geddes in the cosy little kitchen with its open-fired coal stove. But he had left his mark all over the Old Town: there were traces of him in the most unexpected places. So much so that an urchin eager for a penny grabbed me by the hand to point out a bust of Socrates Geddes had placed over an entrance and asserted: "Zur, that's the Professor." In a city of professors, as I discovered when he took me to a Rotary Club luncheon where he spoke to an audience that stayed respectfully beyond their usually inexorable closing time, he was still notably *the* Professor.

I had plenty of time for exploration during this five-day visit, for at that moment Geddes was concentrated on his difficult relations with the Zionist organisation, writing constant letters and memoranda: so, after breakfast, he would turn me over to his son Alisdair's old mountain-climbing companion, Mabel Barker, reputed the best rock-climber in Cumberland, whom I knew of old from a week my wife and I spent with a group of her fellow teachers and climbers in the

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tyrol: a tense, lean, angular girl, with a sharp nose like a bird's, and the sure-footedness of a goat, who shamed me by skipping down the steep far slope of Arthur's Seat whilst I was trying to feel sufficiently assured in a gingerly descent on all fours. That was a vivid week; but it was only at meals, or over a drop of neat whisky before turning in for the night, that I got anything out of Geddes, except for a single ramble we took to Calton Hill on the last afternoon—as if he wished to make belated amends for bidding me visit him without providing any time for our meeting.

At that period the Outlook Tower was an all-but-deserted place, kept going through the financial efforts of a small, loyal group of supporters and the exertions of Mrs. Galloway, the housekeeper, a ruddy-faced woman with a grimly reassuring sense of humour: a woman of the people, Geddes told me, but a lady: a combination still possible in Scotland, but almost never in England. I was at home in this Scots atmosphere, for the democracy worked both ways: after a supper party at the Tower, where I met Hugh McDiarmid, the new Scots poet, an anti-Burns man, the one woman with a title, Lady Whitson, took her place in washing the dishes as easily as an American university wife might, and far more easily than most American women of either her wealth or position.

Geddes conducted me through these dusty, half-dismantled chambers, from which he had been absent for more than a decade. The contents and arrangement of this laboratory-museum-library had filled me with excitement when I first read about them, for one started at the top with an actual view of Edinburgh and the heavens above, and then as one descended storey by storey, one passed from city to region, from region to country, from country to continent, from continent to the world, with every sort of cartographic device and bibliographic aid so that, at least theoretically, one got a rich and full picture of the physical and social world. But now, as if to jeer at Geddes' actual presence, everything had crumbled and fallen apart: here and there in the rubbish, one might find a time-browned historic chart, mournfully meaningful, reminding one of heady discussions and high intellectual hopes before the first World War.

Geddes showed me the dusty piles of manuscripts, the records of his lectures, too rapid and unexpected in content to be taken down accurately by even the swiftest of court stenographers, lectures that never more than hinted at the living essence; bins of teasing notes, mostly on folded paper, that pointed to ideas, often brilliant, that had never been transformed into more communicable discourse once the original voice had vanished; for though Geddes lived to finish his grand opus on biology, thanks to Thomson, a long-contemplated work on Sociology was hardly even begun. "Ay de mi!" Geddes would say with a deep sigh of desperation. "How am I to get these in order? A lifetime's accumulation, never really sorted out. I need your help, Mumford. My health is better now, but my doctors say that a winter in Edinburgh or London might kill me before my time. So it's time to be tidying up these idea-middens, and that not too tardily. Bring your wife and bairn over next winter, when I am settled again in Montpellier. I need you, and while you're working with me, you can get your Doctorat Etranger at the University—an excellent place—and become a professor yourself. Writing is a poor trade. We professors have it easier and live longer. All you need is to present a creditable thesis in French."

At moments when he appealed for help there was a soft womanly pathos about Geddes that contrasted with the almost ferocious virility of his usual self. At such moments he would shrug his shoulders, fling out his arms with a gesture of utter despair, and sometimes a film would cover his haunted sorrow-laden eyes, bringing him close to tears. Tears of frustration? of self-pity? of desperation? Loving him despite the distance between us, grateful to him for all he had given me, I could not help being moved by his plight; and as the years went on, these calls and these appeals, alas!, became more urgent, for his hope of mastering the job himself ebbed from him with increasing symptoms of senescence.

By this time, fortunately, I had steeled myself to resist Geddes' blandishments. I realised that "helping Geddes" would be a career in itself: a career that would need the patience of a saint, the single-mindedness of Browning's Grammarian, the physical stamina of an athlete; and even then would be so full of frustrations and humiliations that it might come abruptly to an end before anything was accomplished. Even to plough through these dead notes would have been the task of a lifetime; and to make sense of them one would have needed constantly to refer to Geddes himself, without any genuine prospect that his memory could now re-quicken the glowing moments when six separate ideas fused into a dazzling unity.

He who wanted to help Geddes would have to re-live Geddes' life, and that would bring him back to the very predicament that now awakened these demands for succour. Forty years before, Geddes needed and might have used someone as devoted as Boswell—and far more self-effacing—to wing his flying words: too late,

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

far too late, he found Philip Boardman,[1] whose record of Geddes' conversations sometimes seems as authentic as the letters in Amelia Defries'[2] or Philip Mairet's[3] biographies.

IF I HAD any doubts about my ability to satisfy P.G.'s demands, a brief incident, when we surveyed Edinburgh from the top of the Tower, would have set me straight. Geddes delighted, not only in the view from the terrace, but in the view inside provided by the old Camera Obscura; for it cast the image of the city on a table in the darkened room so that it came out in brilliant colours, without the blinding overhead light which bleaches colours in direct sunlight: a pure impressionist result. Now I had long practised the impressionist trick of half-shutting my eyes to a landscape to get the same effect; so I was reluctant to accept Geddes' dictum that what I saw on the table had a special beauty I could not possibly have realised without this optical device. Then we went outdoors. Instead of letting me take in the landscape in my own way, he insisted on my seeing it through his eyes, standing back of me and holding me by the shoulders, almost savagely demanding that I pick out of the panorama what he was seeing, and respond to it in the same way.

That settled it. Much as I admired Geddes, much though I valued his help, I would not see Edinburgh or aught else through his eyes. If any single moment marked the ultimate parting of our ways, this was the moment, and that rooftop the place.

ON THE LAST MORNING Mabel Barker and Geddes walked me down to the Waverley Station and his final words were to increase the sense of distance between us. Apart from repeating his old plea that I achieve a doctorate and take an academic post, he put forth an idea that was even further from any conceivable reality: that I might some day become a United States ambassador, carrying further the work that James Russell Lowell had done at the Court of St. James in Geddes' youth. All the way downhill Geddes' familiar suggestions kept buzzing in my ears like insistent flies; and at every step the distance between us widened again, making me impatient for the moment of getting aboard the train. When I finally got to my seat, I took out my notebook and recorded, in detail, what I have been summarising here: that all possibility of any closer relation to Geddes was over; and I even guessed correctly that I would never see him again.

That judgment left me with a sense of desolation that was soon offset by a buoyant sense of release. I was about to turn thirty, and my tutelage was over: indeed, I had already begun to stand on my own feet, and it needed only this last contact with Geddes to realise how independent I necessarily had become; so that though I would continue to draw upon his ideas and his example in many ways, on my own terms, for my own purposes, any closer relation would have turned, inevitably, into a hostile one, as with a child whose parent is not wise enough to cast him loose. I was not willing to arrange the dried flowers of Geddes' thought into lifelike bouquets: but I could use what he had accumulated to enrich the compost out of which new ideas would grow in my own garden.

THE PROOF of my feelings, even before I put the case to myself in so many words, was my failure to be captured even for a moment by Geddes' plan for creating a series of residential "colleges" at Montpellier. From the first, that project seemed to me a folly, for even when his second wife's modest fortune was poured into the scheme, there was no prospect of a permanent foundation, and without Geddes himself his residential college was no college at all, merely another dormitory.

But Geddes was captivated not only by the historic position of Montpellier itself, but by the open heath he had bought which gave him ample scope for building, and not least for planning gardens where he proceeded to arrange his graphs and charts in vegetative form. The fact that this parched Mediterranean heath had no water supply of its own, and was too far from the city to be attached, for the first half-dozen years, to a municipal water supply, did not deter him from inviting Sophia and me to stay with him, in a year when our child was still in the diaper stage. (It's doubtful, of course, if we would have lasted a week.) When he came by a windfall of several thousand dollars, in compensation for the loss of his Cities Exhibition, he invested it in a Château, to boot, as a week-end retreat from a college that was itself a rural retreat from Montpellier. In short, the whole enterprise was a white elephant, and it produced in Geddes' fertile mind a whole herd of little white elephants.

In that final phase Geddes was not so much a scientist or a philosopher as an imperious master-

[1] Philip Boardman, *Patrick Geddes—Maker of the Future* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1944).
[2] Amelia Defries, *The Interpreter Geddes* (London, 1927).
[3] *Pioneer of Sociology: The Life and Letters of Patrick Geddes* (London, 1957).

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

builder, or perhaps I should say a too-long frustrated architect. This was his last opportunity to turn his dreams, his plans, his graphs, into firm stone structures, in his hope that they would testify by their solid presence to his ideas when he was no longer there to explain them. In a sense he was building his pyramid—indeed his tomb. Actually the Montpellier project, I realised, was an evasion: an excuse for not completing the task too long postponed, that of ordering his ideas into some final form that would both explain and justify the endless hours and days he had spent—beginning at four or five in the morning—hunting wild truths within the well-fenced zoo of his graphs.

This activity, this urgency, this adding more buildings to the burden of running a single one, covered up Geddes' despair and concealed a tormenting sense of failure: for in his heart he must have realised that the immense accumulation of tasks he had left for the end of his life would never be accomplished. In his desperation he would fasten on one person after another, demanding their "help," their "co-operation," their "criticism," but all he really asked for was their ear; so that once again he could go through the old exercises, now stereotyped beyond addition or correction: so self-sufficient in his mind that they continued to discourage rather than aid any wider application. These products of his youthful attack of blindness had, ironically, produced another kind of blindness in his old age. His new buildings and gardens, which demanded all his energies, were a kind of eye-bandage to keep him from facing the unbuilt structure of his ideas.

In view of his intentions, his available means, and the final results, the whole Montpellier scheme was a wanton fantasy. But by the time it seized him, he was probably more tired and depleted than I then realised, for a severe fever in India in 1924 had permanently undermined his vitality and probably shortened his life by five or ten years. Now, looking back on that period, I am inclined to think more charitably of those last years, for they did not prevent him after all from finishing with Thomson his long-contemplated opus on biology, and it is there the reader will find some of the best of his graphs, outlined and explained: magnificently audacious and original, and yet inadequate because of their assumed finality.[4]

In trying to account for Geddes' strenuously extraverted activities during the last decade of his life I have not hesitated to call a spade a spade; but it will give a better measure of Geddes' greatness if I now bring forth evidence to show that, in his best moments, he could be even more unsparing in self-criticism. I draw upon a letter written to Branford as late as October 1929, with a first sentence that begins: "Council of war!—How to get over walls which keep us out of reach of other minds—effective reach of them anyway!" Then, after various considerations in his usual manner for marshalling old friends or holding a conference, he says:

> Is not everyone we can think of as completely absorbed in his own thought and works as to be practically *inaccessible* inside his own walls? Are we not all prisoners?...
>
> Is this then the social situation we are trying to understand all this while—that "the individual, in each breast, is tyrannous to sunder them!" Even though there remain good feeling, as reminiscence, are we not—more or less all—like men distressed to the verge of bankruptcy, who know not where to turn. Yet even these often find someone to turn to after all, and thus weather the storm—but—in this world of social thought and endeavour—are not each and all more or less in the same solitary search—like so many explorers diverging in an Arctic wilderness—and mostly to be lost before reaching shelter, or survival, till the return of chilly spring?
>
> Despite the respectable looking minorities—who form a So. So. [Sociological Society], a Le Play House, an O. T. [Outlook Tower] or a college here—and who have some small tenaciously surviving results to show—what *real* advances have we in any direction of thought clarified to common agreement, or of action, or any real co-operation or resulting social effect? Have we anything more than little groups on a seat—on the Embankment at night—weary people so far gregarious, yet each unable for common understanding, much less co-operative activity—unable to buy, or even desire, each other's little wares, which they'll go on hawking again tomorrow—without social result!—and never an offer of real employment.

Unable to change his ways—for who was now more a prisoner of them than himself?—Geddes could nevertheless clearly see where they had led him, and were still leading him. That willingness to face the worst, without self-deception, was in the fine grain of his scientific tradition and honourably counterbalanced his more wilful moments.

As I look through Geddes' letters during the period that followed, I am saddened by two things: the repetitiousness of their ideas and suggestions, and their irrelevance, their failure ever to reach the plane of personal intercourse, of true I-and-Thou-ness, though often full of friendly concern about Sophia, his god-

[4] Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thomson, *Outlines of Biology* (2 vols. London, 1931).

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

son Geddes, or my own health. But his own early expectation never quite vanished. As late as April 1931 he wrote me: "I have no colleague, executor and heir to whom I can look with any substantial hope but you." And one of his very last letters, just a few months before he died, was a final plea for "collaboration," as between equals; but unfortunately the collaboration was to consist in my finding in America funds for carrying out his scheme of building an American residential "college" along with his Scots and Indian "colleges." This appeal came at a moment when America was almost touching the bottom of the great depression, and to that appeal I wrote what I fear was a brutal reply: for I reminded him of his own doctrine, that men come before buildings, and reproached him for squandering on these ghosts of solid masonry the time and the vital energy that should have gone into putting his own unwritten thoughts in order. This answer must have shaken him; and his reply in turn shook me, though its stern beginning abruptly changed: "Dear Mumford—no! Lewis my son!"

In 1932 he at last accepted the knighthood he had declined as a proud republican of the Victorian age upholding the independence of science from royal favour, twenty years before. So he stayed on for the ceremony in London into January, despite his doctor's warnings of its probably fatal consequences. That April I planned to begin a four months' study tour of Europe, and I had made arrangements to spend a week or ten days with Geddes at Montpellier, to come face to face with the work that had occupied him for the past seven years. In my heart, I shrank from this final encounter, knowing how it would in the end only disappoint Geddes and sadden me. Yet I was inwardly unprepared for the announcement of Sir Patrick Geddes' death, which appeared in the New York papers just a week before I sailed for Europe. My Master was dead! That finally ended the dream of faithful discipleship and helpful collaboration that had never come down to earth in either of our lives. But the tragedy of our real parting, as I have noted, bore for me an earlier date.

YET WHEN the dream faded, the reality that had originally stimulated it remained. Released from the pressure of demands I could not fulfil, I was able at last, not merely to draw freely on those parts of Geddes' life and work that still nourished me and incited me to go further along lines he had often indicated but never followed; but at the same time I could, in a series of essays and introductions, call attention to those parts of his work that my contemporaries seemed most in need of. Though I have never written the biography he had nominated me to write, those critical appreciations have perhaps aided, almost as much as a full-length study, in placing Geddes in the niche he now occupies—though I fear that there is a popular tendency to reduce his rank to that of a mere father of modern town planning: a depreciation that I have never shared.

As for my own intellectual obligations to Geddes, they are both closer and remoter than most people who have compared our ideas have discovered: closer in personal indebtedness, remoter in intellectual adhesion. Those who have charitably supposed that I have never entertained an original idea that I did not derive from Geddes know precious little about either of us. Some of Geddes' ideas I have carried further and transformed: but some of his favourite prepossessions, like his singular devotion to Comte, I never shared even as a young man.

But I have no desire to discount my debt even if, like Aristotle before me, I must sometimes contradict my master. When a little while ago Carl Sauer asked me to be co-chairman of the Wenner-Gren Conference on "Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth," I knew far better than anyone else how much I owed to Geddes for that invitation. For it was from Geddes that I first heard the name of our great American geographer, George Perkins Marsh, whose original work on the earth as modified by human action, *Man and Nature,* Geddes had come upon in the 'seventies and valued highly; and it was in all probability the little memoir I had written on Marsh in *The Brown Decades* that helped draw the attention of American geographers back to the pioneer they had neglected.

SOME TOUCH of Geddes' aboriginal energy and vitality, then, has remained present, I would hope, in my work today; though as with a radioactive particle good for a generation, only a half-life is left. At the time I first encountered his thought in 1915 I was at the beginning of a period of invalidism, not too dissimilar from one he had gone through somewhat later: an erratic heart, incipient tuberculosis, possibly an over-active thyroid masking itself as TB, as a later diagnostician once informed me, threatened to halt my whole development. I might easily have drifted into a purely bookish life, short in tether, prudently bridled. That might have been the easy road to conventional academic achievement. But my life took a different course; and it is to Geddes that I mainly owe that difference. To me the lesson of his example was worth—peace to all his more faithful dis-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ciples!—a cartload of his graphs and diagrams.

Yet, at the very moment of parting in 1925, I had a glimpse of an ideal possibility that life itself could not fulfil for us. For, visiting his old apartment at Ramsay Garden, I came upon a small portrait of P.G. in oil, done in his early 'thirties, which I have never seen in reproduction—the hair almost black, the cheeks red, the face unstained by anxiety and grief. This was the young man Thomson and Branford must have known, and he awakened my quick and whole-hearted sympathy as a potential comrade. Had we met then as equals, exchanging our gifts, his for action, mine for expression, both of us fully alive to feelings, sensations, and emotions, not embarrassed by them, rather welcoming them as essential to our total response to life—what might we not have achieved? The tragedy of our relation was, perhaps, at bottom only the accident of our birth-dates. I had been born forty years too late. What we could have done together at the beginning as comrades proved impossible to achieve at the end as master and disciple.

But I leave the last word on Geddes to a contemporary, indeed a colleague of his, D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, the author of that classic work on *Growth and Form*. When the biography of Thompson by his daughter appeared, someone raised the question of why there was no mention of Geddes in that work, though they had so many general points of resemblance, both original, but only half-appreciated, half-heeded minds. In the correspondence that followed in the *Times Literary Supplement*, Ruth Thompson cited one of Thompson's colleagues, who recalled a discussion that had taken place after Geddes' death, when a few members of the faculty who had known him were assessing his life and influence. The two men had never been close, partly perhaps because Geddes had been only a summer visitor at Dundee, but Thompson led the group in his vivid appreciation of Geddes' gifts.

"Why," said one of the participants, "you are talking as if he was the greatest mind among us!" "Well," said D'Arcy Thompson quietly, "wasn't he?"

Thomas Kinsella

Landscape, near Pontoise

On the overcast plain a man in grey clothes bends low
And gropes at the mud; he is earthing or uprooting
Among heavy leaves. In the whole field
One dull poppy burns, on the drill by his boots.

The thick furrows yield themselves to his endless
Moderate care; stalks he tears out or makes firm.
He does not turn, and would not though the blight
Breathed among his fields out of the low clouds.

The blight breathes, or does not, invisibly, as it will,
And the gradual breaking into off-white, scattered
Flower has never altogether been stifled;
Tissue forms about purpose as about a seed.

Indifferent and solitary, he works towards Adam's seed,
Hanging heavy in its grey fruit
As in a limp fist, brainlike. The protecting flesh
When it falls will melt away in a kind of mud.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Robert Penn Warren

The Day Dr. Knox Did It

1. Place and Time

Heat-blaze, white dazzle: and white is the dust
down the only street of Cerulean Springs,
which is only a piece of country road
mislaid, somehow, among the white houses,

as the houses, too, had got mislaid
among the last big oaks and big tulip-trees left
from the old forest-time. But to resume:
heat-dazzle, dust white—an image in sleep,

or in the brain behind the eye-ball,
as now, in the light of this other day,
and year, the eye-ball, stunned by that inner
blaze, sees nothing, can nothing see

outward whatsoever—only
the white dust of that street, and it
is always August, is 3 P.M.,
the mercury 95, and the leaf

of the oak tree curls at the edge like leather,
and the postmaster's setter pants in his cave
of cool back under the rotting floorboards
of the P.O.'s high old porch, and every

shade is down in every house,
and the last ash winks in the black kitchen range,
and the iron creaks with contraction in the lonely
new silence of the kitchen. Far off,

when the head of the moccasin parts the green
algae and it slides up out of the slough,
its trail on the stone sizzles dry in a twinkling,
and the lunacy of the cicada knows

now no remission. The sun is white.
It fills the sky with a scream of whiteness,
and my feet move in the white dust.
My feet are bare, I am nine years old,

and my feet in the white dust move, but I move
in a dream that is silver like willow and water
and the glimmer of water on water-dark stone.
I see in my mind that place I will go.

This is the summer of 1914.
I move toward that coolness. Then I hear the sound.

2. The Event

The sound was like one made by a board
dropped from a builder's scaffold to fall
flat and heavy on another
board grounded solid and flat to make

the sound solid. But cottony, too,
as though its own echoes were tangled in it,
in thickness and softness—an effect that was caused,
no doubt, by the fact he had climbed to the barn loft

to arrange himself. That summer I'd played
there in that loft, and so knew how

if you lay on your back in the hay, all
you could see was the twilight of spider-web

hung from the roof-tree, or maybe one wasp
cruising slow in that gloom with one
sharp glint of light on his hard sheen.
That man—how long had he lain, just looking?

That was the thing that stuck in my head.
I would wonder how long he had lain there, first.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

3. Confederate Veteran Tries to Explain the Event

"But why did he do it, Grandpa?" I said
to the old man sitting under the cedar,
who had come a long way to that place, and that time
when that other man lay down in the hay

to arrange himself. And now the old man
lifted his head to stare at me.
"It's one of those things," he said, and stopped.
"What things?" I said. And he said: "Son—

"son, one of those things you never know."
"But there must be a *why*," I said. Then he
said: "Folks—yes, folks, they up and die."
"But Grandpa—" I said. And he: "They die."

Said: "Yes, by God, and I've seen 'em die.
I've seen 'em die and I've seen 'em dead.
I've seen 'em die hot and seen 'em die cold.
Hot lead and cold steel—" The words, they stopped.

The mouth closed up. The eyes looked away.
Beyond the lawn where the fennel throve,
beyond the fence where the white-wash peeled,
beyond the cedars along the lane,

the eyes fixed. The land, in sunlight,
swam, with the meadow the colour of rust,
and distance the blue of Time, and nothing
oh, nothing—would ever happen, and

in the silence my breath did not happen, but
the eyes, they happened, they found me, I
stood there and waited. "Dying," he said,
"hell, dying's a thing any fool can do."

"But what made him do it?" I said, again.
Then wished I hadn't, for he stared at me.
He stared at me as though I weren't there,
or as though I were dead, or had never been born,

and I felt like dandelion fuzz blown away,
or a word you'd once heard but never could spell,
or only an empty hole in the air.
From the cedar shade his eyes burned red.

Darker than shade, his mouth opened then.
Spit was pink on his lips, I saw the tongue move
beyond the old teeth in the dark of his head.
It moved in that dark. Then, "Son—" the tongue
said.

"For some folks the world gets too much," the tongue
said.
In that dark, the tongue moved. "For some folks,"
it said.

4. The Place Where the Boy Pointed

It was ten days after the event
when the son of the man who had lain in the hay
took me back to the loft where we'd once played,
but this time it wasn't to play, though for what

I didn't know, he just said, "Come on,"
and when I came, and there we stood
in the spider-web gloom and wasp-glint light,
he stood, his face white in shadow, and pointed.

I stared at the place, but the hay was clean,
which was strange, for I'd been hearing them tell
how a .12 gauge will make an awful mess
if you put the muzzle in your mouth.

I kept thinking about how the place looked clean.
I kept wondering who had cleaned up the mess.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

5. And All That Came Thereafter

But ran from such wondering as I ran
down the street, and the street was dancing a-dazzle,
and the dust rose white in plops round my feet
as they ran toward that stream that was silent
and silver

in willow and water, and I would lie
with my eyes shut tight, and let water flow
over me as I lay, and like water, the world
would flow, flow away, on forever. But once

in San Francisco, on Telegraph Hill,
past midnight, alone, and that was
in the time long before that imbecile
tower had there been built, and I there

saw fog swell up from the sea and lean,
and star by star blot the sky out,
and blot the hill, and blot me out
from all relation but to the dry

goat droppings that beneath my feet
pressed the thin soles of my sneakers, as I,
in that swirl of whiteness gone blinder than black,
lifted up my arms, and while distantly

I heard the freighter, savage in fog,
slide past the passage of the Gate,
my own heart, in a rage like joy,
burst. I did not know my name,

nor do I know, even now, the meaning
of another night, by another sea,
when sea-salt on the laurel leaf
in moonlight, like frost, gleamed, and salt

were the tears to my lips on the girl's face, for
she wept, and I did not know why, and thus
entered her body, and in that breathless
instant of poised energy, heard

the sea-sway and the secret grind
of shingle down the glimmering shore.

Later, we lay and heard it. It
from the hollow of earth seemed, but the moon

hung steady as eternity. Now
I sometimes cannot remember her face, nor
the name of the village where we had stayed,
and as for Telegraph Hill, long since

gone is the immigrant's goat, and there now
wearers of pin-stripe and of furs by I. Magnin
have swarmed in their hives of glass to admire
from that point of vantage the rising values

of real estate and the beauty of stars,
which yet in fact shine, and if there is fog,
high above the last grey unravelment, shine,
while fog-wrapped, the freighters, and troopships
now too,

seaward slide, and hooting, proceed
in darkness, and deeper in darkness blooms
the inward orchid, and agon, of
this, our age, of which I—who

have lied, in velleity loved, in weakness
forgiven, who have stolen small objects, committed
adultery, and for a passing pleasure,
as well as for reasons of sanitation,

inflicted death on flies—am,
like you, the perfect image, and if
once through the blaze of that August I fled,
but toward myself I fled, for there is

no water to wash the world away.
We are the world, and it is too late
to pretend we are children at dusk watching fireflies.
We must, more firmly, frame the idea of good.

My small daughter's dog has been killed on the road.
It is night. In the next room she weeps.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Konrad Lorenz

Ecce Homo!

Fish, Birds, Rats & Men (II)

LET US IMAGINE that an absolutely unbiased observer on another planet, perhaps on Mars, is examining human behaviour on earth, with the aid of a telescope whose magnification is too small to enable him to discern individuals and follow their separate behaviour, but large enough for him to observe occurrences such as migration of peoples, wars and similar great historical events. He would never gain the impression that human behaviour was dictated by intelligence, still less by responsible morality. If we suppose our extraneous observer to be a being of pure reason, devoid of instincts himself and unaware of the way in which all instincts in general and aggression in particular can miscarry, he would be at a complete loss how to explain history at all. The ever-recurrent phenomena of history do not have reasonable causes. It is a mere commonplace to say that they are caused by what common parlance so aptly terms "human nature." Unreasoning and unreasonable human nature causes two nations to compete, though no economic necessity compels them to do so; it induces two political parties or religions with amazingly similar programmes of salvation to fight each other bitterly and it impels an Alexander or a Napoleon to sacrifice millions of lives in his attempt to unite the world under his sceptre. We have been taught to regard some of the persons who have committed these and similar absurdities with respect, even as "great" men, we are wont to yield to the political wisdom of those in charge, and we are all so accustomed to these phenomena that most of us fail to realise how abjectly stupid and undesirable the historical mass behaviour of humanity actually is.

Having realised this, however, we cannot escape the question why reasonable beings do behave so unreasonably. Undeniably, there must be superlatively strong factors which are able to overcome the commands of individual reason so completely and which are so obviously impervious to experience and learning. As Hegel said, "What experience and history teach us is this—that people and governments have never learnt anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it."

All these amazing paradoxes, however, find an unconstrained explanation, falling into place like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, if one assumes that human behaviour, and particularly human social behaviour, far from being determined by reason and cultural tradition alone, is still subject to all the laws prevailing in all phylogenetically adapted instinctive behaviour. Of these laws we possess a fair amount of knowledge from studying the instincts of animals. Indeed, if our extramundane observer were a knowledgeable ethologist, he would unavoidably draw the conclusion that Man's social organisation is very similar to that of rats which, like humans, are social and peaceful beings within their clans, but veritable devils towards all fellow-members of their species not belonging to their own community. If, furthermore, our Martian naturalist knew of the explosive rise in human populations, the ever-increasing destructiveness of weapons, and the division of mankind into a few political camps, he would not expect the future of humanity to be any rosier than that of several hostile clans of rats on a ship almost devoid of food. And this prognosis would even be optimistic, for in the case of rats reproduction stops automatically when a certain state of overcrowding is

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reached, while Man as yet has no workable system for preventing the so-called population explosion. Furthermore, in the case of the rats it is likely that after the wholesale slaughter enough individuals would be left over to propagate the species. In the case of Man, this would not be so certain after the use of the hydrogen bomb.

IT IS A CURIOUS PARADOX that the greatest gifts of Man, the unique faculties of conceptual thought and verbal speech which have raised him to a level high above all other creatures and given him mastery over the globe, are not altogether blessings, or at least are blessings that have to be paid for very dearly indeed. All the great dangers threatening humanity with extinction are direct consequences of conceptual thought and verbal speech. They drove Man out of the paradise in which he could follow his instincts with impunity and do or not do whatever he pleased. There is much truth in the parable of the tree of knowledge and its fruit, though I want to make an addition to it to make it fit into my own picture of Adam: that apple was thoroughly unripe! Knowledge springing from conceptual thought robbed Man of the security provided by his well-adapted instincts long, long before it was sufficient to provide him with an equally safe adaptation. Man, as Arnold Gehlen has so truly said, is by nature a jeopardised creature.

CONCEPTUAL THOUGHT and speech changed all Man's evolution by achieving something which is equivalent to the inheritance of acquired characters. We have forgotten that the verb inherit had a juridical connotation long before it acquired a biological one. When a man invents, let us say, bow and arrow, not only his progeny but his entire community will inherit the knowledge and the use of these tools and possess them just as surely as organs grown on the body. Nor is their loss any more likely than the rudimentation of an organ of equal survival value. Thus, within one or two generations a process of ecological adaptation can be achieved which, in normal phylogeny and without the interference of conceptual thought, would have taken a time of an altogether different, much greater order of magnitude. Small wonder indeed if the evolution of social instincts and, what is even more important, social inhibitions could not keep pace with the rapid development forced on human society by the growth of traditional culture, particularly material culture.

Obviously, instinctive behaviour mechanisms failed to cope with the new circumstances which culture unavoidably produced even at its very dawn. There is evidence that the first inventors of pebble tools, the African *Australopithecines,* promptly used their new weapon to kill not only game, but fellow-members of their species as well. Peking Man, the Prometheus who learned to preserve fire, used it to roast his brothers: beside the first traces of the regular use of fire lie the mutilated and roasted bones of *Sinanthropus pekinensis* himself.

One is tempted to believe that every gift bestowed on Man by his power of conceptual thought has to be paid for with a dangerous evil as the direct consequence of it. Fortunately for us, this is not so. Besides the faculty of conceptual thought, another constituent characteristic of Man played an important role in gaining a deeper understanding of his environment, and this is curiosity. Insatiable curiosity is the root of exploration and experimentation, and these activities, even in their most primitive form, imply a function akin to asking questions. Explorative experimentation is a sort of dialogue with surrounding nature. Asking a question and recording the answer lead to anticipating the latter, and, given conceptual thought, to the linking of cause and effect. From here it is but a step to consciously foreseeing the consequences of one's actions. Thus, the same human faculties which supplied Man with tools and with power dangerous to himself, also gave him the means to prevent their misuse: rational responsibility. I want to discuss, one by one, the dangers which humanity incurs by rising above the other animals by virtue of its great specific gifts. Subsequently I shall try to show in what way the greatest gift of all, rational, responsible morality, functions in banning these dangers. Most important of all, I shall have to expound the functional limitation of morality.

THERE ARE mechanisms functionally analogous to morality and the inhibitions which control aggression in various social animals prevent it from injuring or killing fellow-members of the species. These inhibitions are most important and consequently most highly differentiated in those animals which are capable of killing living creatures of about their own size. A raven can peck out the eye of another with one

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thrust of its beak, a wolf can rip the jugular vein of another with a single bite. There would be no more ravens and no more wolves if reliable inhibitions did not prevent such actions. Neither a dove nor a hare nor even a chimpanzee is able to kill its own kind with a single peck or bite. In addition, animals with relatively poor defensive weapons have a correspondingly great ability to escape quickly, even from specially armed predators which are more efficient in chasing, catching and killing than even the strongest of their own species. Since there rarely is, in nature, the possibility of such an animal seriously injuring one of its own kind, there is no selection pressure at work here to breed in killing inhibitions. The absence of such inhibitions is apparent to the animal keeper—to his own and to his animals' disadvantage if he does not take seriously the intra-specific fights of completely "harmless" animals. Under the unnatural conditions of captivity, where a defeated animal cannot escape from its victor, it may be killed slowly and cruelly. In my book *King Solomon's Ring,* I have described in the chapter "Morals and Weapons" how the symbol of peace, the dove, can torture one of its own kind to death, without any inhibition being aroused.

Anthropologists concerned with the habits of *Australopithecus* have repeatedly stressed that these hunting progenitors of man have left humanity with the dangerous heritage of what they term "carnivorous mentality." This statement confuses the concept of the carnivore and the cannibal which are, to a large extent, mutually exclusive. One can only deplore the fact that man has definitely not got a carnivorous mentality! All his trouble arises from his being a basically harmless, omnivorous creature, lacking in natural weapons with which to kill big prey, and, therefore, also devoid of the built-in safety devices which prevent "professional" carnivores from abusing their killing power to destroy fellow-members of their own species. A lion or a wolf may, on extremely rare occasions, kill another by one angry stroke, but all heavily armed carnivores possess sufficiently reliable inhibitions which prevent the self-destruction of the species.

IN HUMAN EVOLUTION, no inhibitory mechanisms preventing sudden manslaughter were necessary, because quick killing was impossible anyhow. The potential victim had plenty of opportunity to elicit the pity of the aggressor by submissive gestures and appeasing attitudes. No selection pressure arose in the prehistory of mankind to breed inhibitory mechanisms preventing the killing of conspecifics until, all of a sudden, the invention of artificial weapons upset the equilibrium of killing potential and social inhibitions. When it did, Man's position was very nearly that of a dove which, by some unnatural trick of nature, has suddenly acquired the beak of a raven. One shudders at the thought of a creature as irascible as all pre-human primates are swinging a well-sharpened hand-axe. Humanity would indeed have destroyed itself by its first inventions, were it not for the very wonderful fact that inventions and responsibility are both the achievements of the same specifically human faculty of asking questions.

NOT THAT OUR PRE-HUMAN ANCESTOR, even at a stage as yet devoid of moral responsibility, was a fiend incarnate, he was by no means poorer in social instincts and inhibitions than a chimpanzee which, after all, is—his irascibility notwithstanding—a social and friendly creature. But whatever his innate norms of social behaviour may have been, they were bound to be thrown out of gear by the invention of weapons. If humanity survived, as after all it did, it never achieved security from the danger of self-destruction. If moral responsibility and unwillingness to kill have indubitably increased, the ease and emotional impunity of killing have increased at the same rate. The distance at which all shooting weapons take effect screens the killer against the stimulus situation which would otherwise activate his killing inhibitions. The deep, emotional layers of our personality simply do not register the fact that the crooking of the forefinger to release a shot tears the entrails of another man. No sane man would even go rabbit-hunting for pleasure if the necessity of killing his prey with his natural weapons brought home to him the full emotional realisation of what he is actually doing.

The same principle applies to an even greater degree to the use of modern remote-control weapons. The man who presses the releasing button is so completely screened against seeing, hearing, or otherwise emotionally realising the consequences of his action, that he can commit it with impunity—even if he is burdened with the power of imagination. Only thus can it be explained that perfectly good-natured men,

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who would not even smack a naughty child, proved to be perfectly able to release rockets or to lay carpets of incendiary bombs on sleeping cities, thereby committing hundreds and thousands of children to a horrible death in the flames. The fact that it is good, normal men who did this is as eerie as any fiendish atrocity of war!

As an indirect consequence, the invention of artificial weapons has brought about a most undesirable predominance of intra-specific selection within mankind. In dealing with the survival value of aggression, and also with the structure of society in rats, I have spoken of the manner in which competition between the fellow-members of one species can produce unadaptive results when it exerts a selection pressure totally unrelated to extra-specific environment.

When Man, by virtue of his weapons and others tools, of his clothing and of fire, had more or less mastered the inimical forces of his extra-specific environment, a state of affairs must have prevailed in which the counter-pressures of the hostile neighbouring hordes had become the chief selecting factor determining the next steps of human evolution. Small wonder indeed if it produced a dangerous excess of what has been termed the "warrior virtues" of Man.

In 1955, I wrote in a paper, "On the killing of members of the same species":

> I believe—and human psychologists, particularly psycho-analysts should test this—that present-day civilised Man suffers from insufficient discharge of his aggressive drive. It is more than probable that the evil effects of the human aggressive drives, explained by Sigmund Freud as the results of a special death wish, simply derive from the fact that in prehistoric times intra-specific selection bred into Man a measure of aggression drive for which in the social order of today he finds no adequate outlet.

If these words contain an element of reproach against psycho-analysis, I must here withdraw it. At the time of writing, there were already some psycho-analysts who did not believe in the death wish and rightly explained the self-destroying effects of aggression as misfunctions of an instinct that was essentially life-preserving. Later, I came to know one psychiatrist and psycho-analyst who, even at that time, was examining the problem of the hypertrophy of aggression owing to intra-specific selection.

Sydney Margolin (in Denver, Colorado) made very exact psycho-analytical and psycho-sociological studies on Prairie Indians, particularly the Utes, and showed that these people suffer greatly from an excess of aggression drive which, under the ordered conditions of present-day North American Indian reservations, they are unable to discharge. It is Margolin's opinion that during the comparatively few centuries when Prairie Indians led a wild life consisting almost entirely of war and raids, there must have been an extreme selection pressure at work, breeding extreme aggressiveness. That this produced changes in the hereditary pattern in such a short time is quite possible. Domestic animals can be changed just as quickly by purposeful selection. Margolin's assumption is supported by the fact that Ute Indians now growing up under completely different educational influences suffer in exactly the same way as the older members of their tribe who had grown up under the educational system of their own culture; moreover, the pathological symptoms under discussion are seen only in those Prairie Indians whose tribes were subjected to the selection process described.

Ute Indians suffer more frequently from neuroses than any other human group, and again and again Margolin found that the cause of the trouble was undischarged aggression. Many of these Indians feel and describe themselves as ill, and when asked what is the matter with them they can only say, "I am an Ute!" Violence towards people not of their tribe, and even manslaughter, belong to the order of the day, but attacks on members of the tribe are extremely rare, for they are prevented by a taboo the severity of which it is easy to understand, considering the early history of the Utes: a tribe constantly at war with neighbouring Indians and (later on) with the white man, must avoid at all costs fights between its own members. Anyone killing a member of the tribe is compelled by strict tradition to commit suicide. This commandment was obeyed even by an Ute policeman who had shot a member of his tribe in self-defence while trying to arrest him. The offender, while under the influence of drink, had stabbed his father in the femoral artery, causing him to bleed to death. When the policeman was ordered by his sergeant to arrest the man for manslaughter—it was obviously not murder—he protested, saying that the man would want to die since he was bound by tradition to commit suicide and would do so by resisting arrest and forcing the

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

policeman to shoot him. He, the policeman, would then have to commit suicide himself. The more than short-sighted sergeant stuck to his order and the tragedy took place exactly as predicted. This and others of Margolin's records read like Greek tragedies: an inexorable fate forces crime upon people and then compels them to expiate voluntarily their involuntarily acquired guilt.

It is objectively convincing, indeed it is proof of the correctness of Margolin's interpretation of the behaviour of Ute Indians that these people are particularly susceptible to accidents. It has been proved that accident-proneness may result from repressed aggression, and in these Utes the rate of motor accidents exceeds that of any other car-driving human group. Anybody who has ever driven a fast car when really angry knows—in so far as he is capable of self-observation in this condition—what strong inclination there is to self-destructive behaviour in a situation like this. Here even the expression "death wish" seems apt.

IT IS SELF-EVIDENT that intra-specific selection is still working today in an undesirable direction. There is a high positive selection premium on the instinctive foundations conducive to such traits as the amassing of property, self-assertion, etc., and there is an almost equally high negative premium on simple goodness. Commercial competition today might threaten to fix hereditarily in us hypertrophies of these traits as horrible as the intra-specific aggression evolved by competition between warfaring tribes of Stone Age Man. It is fortunate that the accumulation of riches and power does not necessarily lead to large families—rather the opposite—or else the future of mankind would look even darker than it does.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR and killing inhibitions represent only one special case among many in which phylogenetically adapted behaviour mechanisms are thrown out of balance by the rapid change wrought in human ecology and sociology by cultural development. In order to explain the function of responsible morality in re-establishing a tolerable equilibrium between Man's instincts and the requirements of a culturally evolved social order, a few words must first be said about social instincts in general.

It is a widely held opinion, shared by some contemporary philosophers, that all human behaviour patterns which serve the welfare of the community, as opposed to that of the individual, are dictated by specifically human rational thought. Not only is this opinion erroneous, but the very opposite is true. If it were not for a rich endowment of social instincts, Man could never have risen above the animal world. All specifically human faculties, the power of speech, cultural tradition, moral responsibility could have evolved only in a being which, before the very dawn of conceptual thinking, lived in well-organised communities. Our pre-human ancestor was indubitably as true a friend to his friend as a chimpanzee or even a dog, as tender and solicitous to the young of his community and as self-sacrificing in its defence, aeons before he developed conceptual thought and became aware of the consequences of his actions.

According to Immanuel Kant's teachings on morality, it is human reason (*Vernunft*) alone which supplies the categorical imperative "thou shalt" as an answer to responsible self-questioning concerning any possible consequences of a certain action. However, it is doubtful whether "reason" is the correct translation of Kant's use of the word *"Vernunft"* which also implies the connotation of common sense and of understanding and appreciation of another "reasonable" being. For Kant it is self-evident that one reasonable being cannot possibly want to hurt another. This unconscious acceptance of what he considered self-evident, in other words, of common sense, represents the chink in the great philosopher's shining armour of pure rationality, through which emotion, which always means an instinctive urge, creeps into his considerations and makes them more acceptable to the biologically minded than they would otherwise be. It is hard to believe that a man will refrain from a certain action which natural inclination urges him to perform only because he has realised that it involves a logical contradiction. To assume this, one would have to be an even more unworldly German professor and an even more ardent admirer of reason than Immanuel Kant was.

In reality, even the fullest rational insight into the consequences of an action and into the logical consistency of its premise would not result in an imperative or in a prohibition, were it not for some emotional, in other words instinctive, source of energy supplying motivation. Like power steering in a modern car, responsible morality derives from the same primal

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

powers which it was created to keep in rein. Man as a purely rational being, divested of his animal heritage of instincts, would certainly not be an angel—the opposite.

SUPPOSING THAT a being entirely indifferent to values, unable to see anything worth preserving in humanity, in human culture and in life itself, were examining the principle of the action of pressing the button releasing the hydrogen bomb, thereby destroying all life on our planet; even a full realisation of the consequences would, in such a monster, elicit no imperative forbidding the deed, but only a reaction tantamount to saying, "So what?" We need not even suppose this hypothetical creature to be actively evil and to share the view of Goethe's Mephistopheles that everything created is worthy of annihilation; mere absence of any emotional appreciation of values could make it react in the way described.

Always and everywhere it is the unreasoning, emotional appreciation of values that adds a plus or a minus sign to the answer of Kant's categorical self-questioning and makes it an imperative or a veto. By itself, reason can only devise means to achieve otherwise determined ends; it cannot set up goals nor give us orders. Left to itself, reason is like a computer into which no relevant information conducive to an important answer has been fed. Logically valid though all its operations may be, it is a wonderful system of wheels within wheels, without a motor to make them go round. The motive power that makes them do so stems from instinctive behaviour mechanisms much older than reason and not directly accessible to rational self-observation. They are the source of love and friendship, of all warmth of feeling, of appreciation of beauty, of the urge to artistic creativeness, of insatiable curiosity striving for scientific enlightenment. These deepest strata of the human personality are, in their dynamics, not essentially different from the instincts of animals, but on their basis human culture has erected all the enormous superstructure of social norms and rites whose function is so closely analogous to that of phylogenetic ritualisation. Both phylogenetically and culturally evolved norms of behaviour represent motives and are felt to be values by any normal human being. Both are woven into an immensely complicated system of universal interaction to analyse which is all the more difficult as most of its processes take place in the subconscious and are by no means directly accessible to self-observation. Yet it is imperative for us to understand the dynamics of this system, because insight into the nature of values offers the only hope for our ever creating the new values and ideals which our present situation needs so badly.

EVEN THE FIRST compensatory function of moral responsibility, preventing the *Australopithecines* from destroying themselves with their first pebble tools, could not have been achieved without an instinctive appreciation of life and death. Some of the most intelligent and most social birds and mammals react in a highly dramatic way to the sudden death of a member of their species. Greylag geese will stand with outspread wings over a dying friend hissing defensively, as Heinroth saw after having shot a goose in the presence of its family.

I observed the same behaviour on the occasion of an Egyptian goose killing a greylag gosling by hitting it on the head with its wing; the gosling staggered towards its parents and collapsed, dying of cerebral haemorrhage. Though the parents could not have seen the deadly blow, they reacted in the way described. In the Munich zoo some years ago an essentially friendly bull elephant while playing with his keeper unintentionally injured him severely, severing an artery in the man's thigh. The elephant immediately seemed to realise that something dangerous had befallen his friend and with the best intentions did the worst thing he could do: he stood protectively over the fallen man, thus preventing medical aid from reaching him. Professor Bernhard Grzimek told me that an adult male chimpanzee which had bitten him rather badly, seemed very concerned, after his rage had abated, about what he had done and tried to press together, with his fingers, the lips of Grzimek's worst wounds. It is highly characteristic of that dauntless scientist that he permitted the ape to do so.

WHATEVER THE CONSEQUENCES may have been that prevented the first killers from repeating their deed, realisation of these consequences and, therewith, a primitive form of responsibility must have been at work. Apart from maintaining the equilibrium between the ability and the inhibition to kill, responsible morality does not seem to have been too severely

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

taxed in the earliest communities of true men. It is no daring speculation to assume that the first human beings who really represented our own species, those of Cro-Magnon, had roughly the same instincts and natural inclinations as we have ourselves.

Now let us suppose that our assumption is correct and that the men of such a palaeolithic tribe did indeed have the same natural inclinations, the same endowment with social instincts as we have ourselves. Let us imagine a life, lived dangerously in the exclusive company of a dozen or so close friends and their wives and children. There would be some friction, some jealousy about girls, or rank order, but on the whole I think that this kind of rivalry would come second to the continuous necessity for mutual defence against hostile neighbouring tribes. The men would have fought side by side ever since they could remember; they would have saved each other's lives many times; all would have ample opportunity to discharge intra-specific aggression against their enemies, none would feel the urge to injure a member of his own community. In short, the sociological situation must have been, in very many respects, comparable to that of the soldiers of a small fighting unit on a particularly dangerous and independent assignment. We know to what heights of heroism and utter self-abnegation average, unromantic modern men have risen under these circumstances. Incidentally, it is quite typical of Man that his most noble and admirable qualities are brought to the fore in situations involving the killing of other men, just as noble as they are! However cruel and savage such a community may be to another, within its bonds natural inclination alone is very nearly sufficient to make men obey the ten commandments—perhaps with the exception of the third. One does not steal another man's rations or weapons and it seems rather dirty to covet the wife of a man who has saved one's life a number of times. One would certainly not kill him, and one would, from natural inclination, honour not only father and mother, but the aged and experienced in general, just as deer and baboons do.

THE IMAGINATION of Man's heart is not really evil from his youth, as the book of Genesis asserts. Man can behave very decently indeed in tight spots, provided they are of a kind that occurred often enough in the palaeolithic period to produce phylogenetically adapted social norms that deal with the situation. Loving your neighbour like yourself and risking your life in trying to save his is a matter of course if he is your best friend and has saved yours a number of times; you do it without even thinking. The situation is entirely different if the man for whose life you are expected to risk your own or for whom you are supposed to make other sacrifices, is an anonymous contemporary on whom you have never set eyes. In this case it is not love for the fellow human being that activates self-denying behaviour—if indeed it is activated—but the love for some culturally evolved traditional norm of social behaviour. Love of something or other is, in very many cases, the motivation behind the power of the categorical imperative—an assertion which, I think, Kant would deny.

Our Cro-Magnon warrior had plenty of hostile neighbours against whom to discharge his aggressive drive and he had just the right number of reliable friends to love. His moral responsibility was not overtaxed by an exercise of function which prevented him from striking, in sudden anger, at his companions with his sharpened hand-axe. The increase in number of individuals belonging to the same community is in itself sufficient to upset the balance between the personal bond and the aggressive drive. It is definitely detrimental to the bond of friendship if a person has too many friends. It is proverbial that one can have only a few really close friends. To have a large number of "acquaintances," many of whom may be faithful allies with a legitimate claim to be regarded as real friends, overtaxes a man's capacity for personal love and dilutes the intensity of his emotional attachment. The close crowding of many individuals in a small space brings about a fatigue of all social reactions. Every inhabitant of a modern city is familiar with the surfeit of social relationships and responsibilities and knows the disturbing feeling of not being as pleased as he ought to be at the visit of a friend, even if he is genuinely fond of him and has not seen him for a long time. That crowding increases the propensity to aggressive behaviour has long been known and demonstrated experimentally by sociological search.

On the other hand, there is, in the modern community, no legitimate outlet for aggressive behaviour. To keep the peace is the first of civic

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

duties and the hostile neighbouring tribe, once the target at which to discharge phylogenetically programmed aggression, has now withdrawn to an ideal distance, hidden behind a curtain, if possible of iron. Among the many phylogenetically adapted norms of human social behaviour there is hardly one that does not need to be controlled and kept in leash by responsible morality. This indeed is the deep truth contained in all sermons preaching asceticism. Most of the vices and deadly sins condemned today correspond to inclinations that were purely adaptive or at least harmless in primitive Man. Palaeolithic people hardly ever had enough to eat and if, for once, they had trapped a mammoth, it was biologically correct and moral for every member of the horde to gorge to his utmost capacity; gluttony was not a vice. When, for once, they were fully fed, primitive human beings rested from their strenuous life and were as absolutely lazy as possible, but there was nothing reprehensible in their sloth. Their life was so hard that there was no danger of healthy sensuality degenerating into debauch. A man sorely needed to keep his few possessions, weapons and tools and a few nuts for tomorrow's meal; there was no danger of his hoarding instinct turning into avarice. Alcohol was not invented and there are no indications that Man had discovered the reinforcing properties of alkaloids, the only real vices known of present-day primitive tribes. In short, Man's endowment with phylogenetically adapted patterns of behaviour met the requirements well enough to make the task of responsible morality very easy indeed. Its only commandment at the time was: thou shalt not strike thy neighbour with a hand-axe even if he angers thee.

CLEARLY, THE TASK OF compensation devolving on responsible morality increases at the same rate at which the ecological and sociological conditions created by culture deviate from those to which human instinctive behaviour is phylogenetically adapted. Not only does this deviation continue to increase, but it does so with an acceleration that is truly frightening.

The fate of humanity hangs on the question whether or not responsible morality will be able to cope with its rapidly growing burden. We shall not lighten this burden by overestimating the strength of morality, still less by attributing omnipotence to it. We have better chances of supporting moral responsibility in its ever-increasing task if we humbly realise and acknowledge that it is "only" a compensatory mechanism of very limited strength and that, as I have already explained, it derives what power it has from the same kind of motivational sources as those which it has been created to control. The dynamics of instinctive drives, of phylogenetically and culturally ritualised behaviour patterns, together with the controlling force of responsible morality, form a very complicated systemic whole which is not easy to analyse. However, the recognition of the mutual functional interdependence of its parts, even at the present incomplete stage of our knowledge, helps us to understand a number of phenomena which otherwise would remain completely unintelligible.

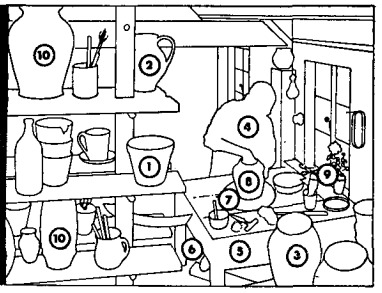
WE ALL SUFFER to some extent from the necessity of controlling our natural inclinations by the exercise of moral responsibility. Some of us, lavishly endowed with social inclinations, suffer hardly at all, other less lucky ones need all the strength of their sense of moral responsibility to keep from getting into trouble with the strict requirements of modern society.

According to a useful old psychiatric definition, a psychopath is a man who either suffers himself from the demands of society or else makes society suffer. Thus in one sense we are all psychopaths, for each of us suffers from the necessity of self-imposed control for the good of the community. This definition, however, was meant to apply particularly to those people who do not just suffer in secret, but overtly break down under the stress imposed upon them, becoming either neurotic or delinquent. Even according to this much narrower interpretation of our definition, the "normal" human being differs from the psychopath, the good man from the criminal, much less sharply than the healthy man differs from the pathological.

IF WE ARE ASSESSING the behaviour of a certain person, ourselves for example, we will naturally rate any particular action the higher the less it is motivated by natural inclination. On the other hand, if we are assessing people as friends we will naturally prefer the ones whose friendship does not spring from rational considerations—however moral these may be—but from the warm feelings of natural

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE COUNTRY POTTER



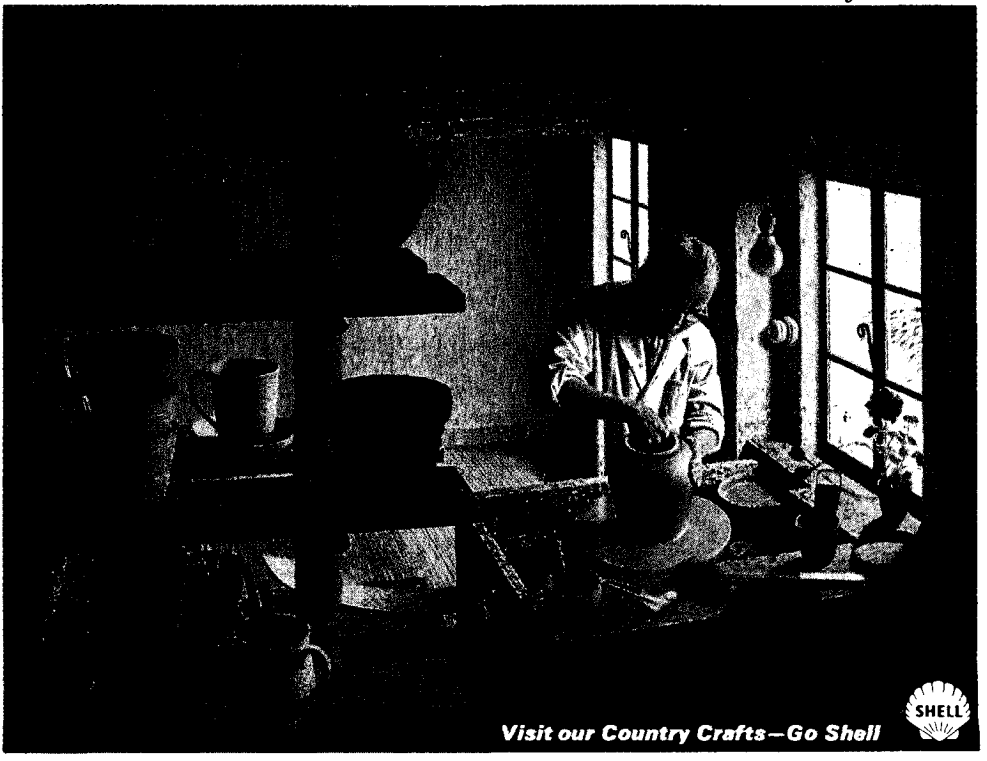
AT POTTERY HILL, Wrecclesham, near Farnham in Surrey. Richard and Arthur Harris dig clay and bake pots in a pottery which sprawls on the crest of the hill. Address: Farnham Pottery, Wrecclesham, nr. Farnham, Surrey. (Shell Touring Map Number 2 from your Shell Dealer.)

Grandfather Absolom Harris established this pottery in 1872 to re-introduce the famous 16th century Farnham "Greenware." The local blue galt clay is ideally suited to the making of robust horticultural and domestic ware such as bread crocks, terrace and flower pots **1**, pitchers **2** and huge Ali Baba jars **3**. Here the thrower **4** 'plonks' lumps of clay on to an old kick wheel shown in **5**. With rhythmic kicks on the foot treadle **6**, the wheel **7** revolves, and the clay is drawn up into elegant shapes **8**. The pot is removed from the wheel by pulling a length of wire **9** across it while still in motion. Finished pots **10** are then stacked for initial drying and hardening. The bottle kilns, each capable of holding thousands of pots at one firing, burn continuously for three days. The glowing red-hot pots must then be left a further four days to cool before they can be handled.

In contrast, visitors can see (but not at week-ends) at Kingswood Pottery, Whitley, near Godalming (Shell Touring Map No. 2) a pottery where glazed and decorated ware is thrown on an electric wheel and baked in electrically fired kilns. England and Wales have many such skilled craftsmen bringing old traditional techniques to bear on modern production problems. Write for a list to the Rural Industries Bureau, 35 Camp Road, Wimbledon Common, London, S.W.19.

Also, the free monthly leaflet '*Go Shell*,' covering local events and information in your area, is available from your Shell station.

Illustration : Jean-Leon Huens



PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RAVEOLUTIONARY

Our daily New York flight now Tycoon-Timed

Air-India faces facts. Today most of us have a lot to do and are in a great rush. So Air-India's daily New York take-off is at a civilised hour—1245. from London.

Reach New York at 1525., in nice time for connections to any other part of USA

The flight? Boeing 707 speed and comfort. Plus unique Indian hospitality, rich and real.

AIR-INDIA

A Boeing a day to the USA

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

inclination. It is no paradox but plain common sense that we use two different standards for judging the deeds of a man and the man himself.

The man who behaves socially from natural inclination normally makes few demands on the controlling mechanism of his own moral responsibility. Thus, in times of stress, he has huge reserves of moral strength to draw upon; while the man who even in everyday life has constantly to exert all his moral strength in order to curb his natural inclinations into a semblance of normal social behaviour is very likely to break down completely in the case of additional stress.

The stress under which morally responsible behaviour breaks down can be of varying kinds. It is not so much the one, sudden, great temptation, that makes human morality break down, as the effect of any prolonged situation that exerts an increasing strain on the compensatory power of morality. Hunger, anxiety, endlessly facing difficult decisions, overwork, hopelessness and so on all have the effect of sapping moral energy and, in the long run, making it break down. Anyone who has had the opportunity to observe men under this kind of strain, for example in war or in prisoner of war camps, knows how unpredictably and suddenly moral decompensation sets in. Men in whose strength one trusted unconditionally suddenly break down, and others of whom one would never have expected it prove to be sources of inexhaustible energy, keeping up the morale of others by their example. Anyone who has experienced such things knows that the fervour of good intention and its power of endurance are two independent variables. Once you have realised this, you cease to feel superior to the man who breaks down a little sooner than you do yourself.

Norms of social behaviour developed by cultural ritualisation play at least as important a part in the context of human society as instinctive motivation and the control exerted by responsible morality. Even at the earliest dawn of culture, when the invention of tools was just beginning to upset the equilibrium of phylogenetically evolved patterns of social behaviour, Man's newborn responsibility must have found strong aid in cultural ritualisation. Evidence of cultural rites reaches back almost as far as that of the use of tools and of fire. Of course we can expect pre-historical evidence of culturally ritualised behaviour only when ritualisation has reached comparatively high levels of differentiation, as in burial ceremonies or in the arts of painting and sculpture. These make their first appearance simultaneously with our own species and the wonderful proficiency of the first-known painters and sculptors suggests that even by their time, art had quite a long history behind it. Considering all this, it is quite possible that a cultural tradition of behavioural norms originated as early as the use of tools or even earlier. The beginnings of both have been found in the chimpanzee.

Customs and taboos may acquire the power to motivate behaviour in a way comparable to that of autonomous instincts. Not only highly developed rites or ceremonies but also simpler and less conspicuous norms of social behaviour may attain, after a number of generations, the character of sacred customs which are loved and considered as values whose infringement is severely frowned upon by public opinion. Sacred custom owes its motivating force to phylogenetically evolved behaviour patterns of which two are of particular importance. One is the response of militant enthusiasm by which any group defends its social norms and rites against another group not possessing them; the other is the group's cruel taunting of any of its members who fail to conform with the accepted "good form" of behaviour. Without the phylogenetically programmed love for traditional custom, human society would lack the supporting apparatus to which it owes its indispensable structure. Yet, like any phylogenetically programmed behaviour mechanism, the one under discussion can miscarry. School classes or companies of soldiers, which can both be regarded as models of primitive group structure, can be very cruel indeed in their ganging up against an outsider. The purely instinctive response to a physically abnormal individual, for instance the jeering at a fat boy, is absolutely identical, as far as overt behaviour is concerned, with discrimination against a person who differs from the group in culturally developed social norms—for instance a child who speaks a different dialect.

The ganging up against an individual diverging from the social norms characteristic of a group, and the group's enthusiastic readiness to defend these social norms and rites, are both good illustrations of the way in which culturally determined conditioned stimulus situations release activities which are fundamentally instinctive. They are also excellent examples of

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

typical compound behaviour patterns whose primary survival value is as obvious as the danger of their misfiring under the conditions of the modern social order.

HERE I must recall the somewhat surprising fact that we have no immediate knowledge of the function and/or survival value of the majority of our own established customs, notwithstanding our emotional conviction that they do indeed constitute high values. This paradoxical state of affairs is explained by the simple fact that customs are not Man-made in the same sense as human inventions are, from the pebble tool up to the jet plane.

There may be exceptional cases in which causal insight gained by a great lawgiver determines a social norm. Moses is said to have recognised the pig as a host of the *trichina,* but if he did, he preferred to rely on the devout religious observance of his people rather than on their intellect when he asserted that Jehovah himself had declared the porker an unclean animal. In general, however, it is quite certain that it hardly ever was insight into a valuable function that gave rise to traditional norms and rites, but the age-old process of natural selection. Historians will have to face the fact that natural selection determined the evolution of cultures in the same manner as it did that of species.

To the biologist who knows the ways in which selection works and who is also aware of its limitations it is in no way surprising to find, in its constructions, some details which are unnecessary or even detrimental to survival. The human mind, endowed with the power of deduction, can quite often find solutions to problems which natural selection fails to resolve. Selection may produce incomplete adaptation even when it uses the material furnished by mutation and when it has huge time periods at its disposal. It is much more likely to do so when it has to determine, in an incomparably shorter time, which of the randomly arising customs of a culture make it best fitted to survival. Small wonder indeed if, among the social norms and rites of any culture, we find a considerable number which are unnecessary or even clearly inexpedient and which selection nevertheless has failed to eliminate. Many superstitions can become institutionalised and be carried on for generations. Also, intra-specific selection often plays as dangerous a role in the development of cultural ritualisation as in phylogenesis. The process of so-called status-seeking, for instance, produces the bizarre excrescences in social norms and rites which are so typical of intra-specific selection.

HOWEVER, EVEN IF SOME social norms or rites are quite obviously maladaptive, this does not imply that they may be eliminated without further consideration. The social organisation of any culture is a complicated system of universal interaction between a great many divergent traditional norms of behaviour and it can never be predicted without a very thorough analysis of what repercussions the cutting out of even one single part may have for the functioning of the whole.

The balanced interaction between all the single norms of social behaviour characteristic of a culture accounts for the fact that it usually proves highly dangerous to mix cultures. To kill a culture it is often sufficient to bring it into contact with another, particularly if the latter is higher, or is at least regarded as higher, as the culture of a conquering nation usually is. The people of the subdued side then tend to look down upon everything they previously held sacred and to ape the customs which they regard as superior. As the system of social norms and rites characteristic of a culture is always adapted, in many particular ways, to the special conditions of its environment, this unquestioning acceptance of foreign customs almost invariably leads to maladaptation. Colonial history offers abundant examples of its causing the destruction not only of cultures but also of peoples and races. Even in the less tragic case of rather closely related and roughly equivalent cultures mixing there usually are some undesirable results, because each finds it easier to imitate the most superficial, least valuable customs of the other. The first items of American culture imitated by German youth immediately after the last war were gum-chewing, Coca-cola drinking, the crew-cut and the reading of coloured comic strips. More valuable social norms characteristic of American culture were obviously less easy to imitate.

QUITE APART FROM the danger to one culture arising from contact with another, all systems of social norms and rites are vulnerable in the same way as systems of phylogenetically evolved patterns of social behaviour. Not being

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Man-made, but produced by selection, their function is, without special scientific investigation, unknown to Man himself, and therefore their balance is as easily upset by the effects of conceptual thought as that of any system of instinctive behaviour. Like the latter, they can be made to miscarry by any environmental change not "foreseen" in their "programming," but while instincts persist for better or worse, traditional systems of social behaviour can disappear altogether within one generation, because, like the continuous state that constitutes the life of an organism, that which constitutes a culture cannot bear any interruption of its continuity.

SEVERAL COINCIDING factors are at present threatening to interrupt the continuity of our Western culture. There is, in our culture, an alarming break of traditional continuity between the generation born in about 1900 and the next. This fact is incontestable, its causes are still doubtful. Diminishing cohesion of the family group and decreasing personal contact between teacher and pupil are probably important factors. Very few of the present generation have ever had the opportunity of seeing their fathers at work, few pupils learn from their teachers by collaborating with them. This used to be the rule with peasants, artisans and even scientists, provided they taught at relatively small universities. The industrialisation that prevails in all sectors of human life produces a distance between the generations which is not compensated for by the greatest familiarity, by the most democratic tolerance and permissiveness of which we are so proud. Young people seem to be unable to accept the values held in honour by the older generation, unless they are in close contact with at least one of its representatives who commands their unrestricted respect and love.

Another probably important factor contributing to the same effect is the real obsolescence of many social norms and rites still valued by some of the older generation. The extreme speed of ecological and sociological change wrought by the development of technology causes many customs to become maladaptive within one generation.

Such criticism is indubitably over-stressed by the prevalence of scientific thought and the unrelenting demand for causal understanding, both of which are the most characteristic, if not the only, virtues of our century. However, scientific enlightenment tends to engender doubt in the value of traditional beliefs long before it furnishes the causal insight necessary to decide whether some accepted custom is an obsolete superstition or a still indispensable part of a system of social norms. Again, it is the unripe fruit of the tree of knowledge that proves to be dangerous; indeed I suspect that the whole legend of the tree of knowledge is meant to defend sacred traditions against the premature inroads of incomplete rationalisation.

AS IT IS, WE DO NOT KNOW enough about the function of any system of culturally ritualised norms of behaviour to give a rational answer to the perfectly rational question what some particular custom is good for, in other words wherein lies its survival value. When an innovator rebels against established norms of social behaviour and asks why he should conform to them, we are usually at a loss for an answer. It is only in rare cases, as in my example of Moses' law against eating pigs, that we can give the would-be reformer such a succinct answer as: "You will get trichinosis if you don't obey." In most cases the defender of accepted tradition has to resort to seemingly lame replies, saying that certain things are "simply not done," are not cricket, are un-American or sinful, if he does not prefer to appeal to the authority of some venerable father-figure who also regarded the social norm under discussion as inviolable.

To anyone for whom the latter is still endowed with the emotional value of a sacred rite, such an answer appears as self-evident and satisfactory; to anybody who has lost this feeling of reverence it sounds hollow and sanctimonious. Understandably, if not quite forgivably, such a person tends to think that the social norm in question is just superstition, if he does not go so far as to consider its defender as insincere. This, incidentally, is very frequently the main point of dissension between people of different generations.

In order correctly to appreciate how indispensable cultural rites and social norms really are, one must keep in mind that, as Arnold Gehlen has put it, contemporary Man is by nature a being of culture. In other words, Man's whole system of innate activities and reactions is phylogenetically so constructed, so "calculated" by evolution, as to *need* to be complemented by cultural tradition. For instance, all the tremendous neuro-sensory apparatus of

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

human speech is phylogenetically evolved, but so constructed that its function presupposes the existence of a culturally developed language which the infant has to learn. The greater part of all phylogenetically evolved patterns of human social behaviour is inter-related with cultural tradition in an analogous way. The urge to become a member of a group, for instance, is certainly something that has been programmed in the pre-human phylogeny of Man, but the distinctive properties of any group which make it coherent and exclusive are norms of behaviour ritualised in cultural development. Without traditional rites and customs representing a common property valued and defended by all members of the group, human beings would be quite unable to form social units exceeding in size that of the primal family group which can be held together by the instinctive bond of personal friendship.

The equipment of man with phylogenetically programmed norms of behaviour is just as dependent on cultural tradition and rational responsibility as, conversely, the function of both the latter is dependent on instinctual motivation. Were it possible to rear a human being of normal genetical constitution under circumstances depriving it of all cultural tradition—which is impossible not only for ethical but also for biological reasons—the subject of the cruel experiment would be very far from representing a reconstruction of a pre-human ancestor, as yet devoid of culture. It would be a poor cripple, deficient in higher functions in a way comparable to that in which idiots who have suffered encephalitis during infantile or foetal life lack the higher functions of the cerebral cortex. No man, not even the greatest genius, could invent, all by himself, a system of social norms and rites forming a substitute for cultural tradition.

TODAY one has plenty of unwelcome opportunity to observe the consequences which even a partial deficiency of cultural tradition has on social behaviour. The human beings thus affected range from young people advocating necessary, if dangerous, abrogations of customs that have become obsolete, to angry young men and rebellious gangs of juveniles, and finally to the appearance of a certain, well-defined type of juvenile delinquent which is the same all over the world. Blind to all values, these unfortunates are the victims of infinite boredom.

The means by which an expedient compromise between the rigidity of social norms and the necessity of adaptive change can be effected is prescribed by biological laws of the widest range of application. No organic system can attain to any higher degree of differentiation without firm and cohesive structures supporting it and holding it together. Such a structure and its support can, in principle, only be gained by the sacrifice of certain degrees of freedom that existed before. A worm can bend anywhere, an arthropod only where its cuticular skeleton is provided with joints for that purpose. Changes in outer or inner environment may demand degrees of freedom not permitted by the existing structure and may necessitate its partial and/or temporary disintegration, in the same way that growth necessitates the periodical shedding of the shell in crustacea and other arthropods. This act of demolishing carefully erected structures, though indispensable if better adapted ones are to arise, is always followed by a period of dangerous vulnerability, as is impressively illustrated by the defenceless situation of the newly moulted soft-shelled crab.

All this applies unrestrictedly to the "solidified," that is to say institutionalised, system of social norms and rites which function very much like a supporting skeleton in human cultures. In the growth of human cultures, as in that of arthropods, there is a built-in mechanism providing for graduated change. During and shortly after puberty human beings have an indubitable tendency to loosen their allegiance to all traditional rites and social norms of their culture, allowing conceptual thought to cast doubt on their value and to look around for new and perhaps more worthy ideals. There probably is, at that time of life, a definite sensitive period for a new object-fixation, much as in the case of the object-fixation found in animals and called imprinting. If, at that critical time of life, old ideals prove fallacious under critical scrutiny and new ones fail to appear, the result is that complete aimlessness, the utter boredom which characterises the young delinquent. If, on the other hand, the clever demagogue, well versed in the dangerous art of producing supra-normal stimulus situations, gets hold of young people at the susceptible age, he finds it easy to guide their object-fixation in a direction sub-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

servient to his political aims. At the post-pubertal age some human beings seem to be driven by an overpowering urge to espouse a cause, and, failing to find a worthy one, may become fixated on astonishingly inferior substitutes. The instinctive need to be the member of a closely knit group fighting for common ideals may grow so strong that it becomes inessential what these ideals are and whether they possess any intrinsic value. This, I believe, explains the formation of juvenile gangs whose social structure is very probably a rather close reconstruction of that prevailing in primitive human society.

APPARENTLY THIS PROCESS of object-fixation can take its full effect only once in an individual's life. Once the valuation of certain social norms or the allegiance to a certain cause is fully established, it cannot be erased again, at least not to the extent of making room for a new, equally strong one. Also it would seem that once the sensitive period has elapsed, a man's ability to embrace ideals at all is considerably reduced. All this helps to explain the hackneyed truth that human beings have to live through a rather dangerous period at and shortly after puberty. The tragic paradox is that the danger is greatest for those who are by nature best fitted to serve the noble cause of humanity.

THE PROCESS of object-fixation has consequences of an importance that can hardly be overestimated. It determines neither more nor less than that which a man will live for, struggle for and, under certain circumstances, blindly go to war for. It determines the conditioned stimulus situation releasing a powerful phylogenetically evolved behaviour which I propose to call that of militant enthusiasm.

Militant enthusiasm is particularly suited for the paradigmatic illustration of the manner in which a phylogenetically evolved pattern of behaviour interacts with culturally ritualised social norms and rites, and in which, though absolutely indispensable to the function of the compound system, it is prone to miscarry most tragically if not strictly controlled by rational responsibility based on causal insight. The Greek word *enthousiasmos* implies that a person is possessed by a god, the German word *Begeisterung* means that he is controlled by a spirit, a *Geist,* more or less holy.

In reality, militant enthusiasm is a specialised form of communal aggression, clearly distinct from and yet functionally related to the more primitive forms of petty individual aggression. Every man of normally strong emotions knows, from his own experience, the subjective phenomena that go hand in hand with the response of militant enthusiasm. A shiver runs down the back, and, as more exact observation shows, along the outside of both arms. One soars elated above all the ties of everyday life, one is ready to abandon all for the call of what, in the moment of this specific emotion, seems to be a sacred duty. All obstacles in its path become unimportant, the instinctive inhibitions against hurting or killing one's fellows lose, unfortunately, much of their power. Rational considerations, criticism, and all reasonable arguments against the behaviour dictated by militant enthusiasm are silenced by an amazing reversal of all values, making them appear not only untenable but base and dishonourable. Men may enjoy the feeling of absolute righteousness even while they commit atrocities. Conceptual thought and moral responsibility are at their lowest ebb. As an Ukrainian proverb says: "When the banner is unfurled, all reason is in the trumpet."

THE SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCES just described are correlated with the following, objectively demonstrable phenomena. The tone of the entire striated musculature is raised, the carriage is stiffened, the arms are raised from the sides and slightly rotated inwards so that the elbows point outwards. The head is proudly raised, the chin stuck out, and the facial muscles mime the "hero face," familiar from the films. Down the back and along the outer surface of the arms the hair stands on end. This is the objectively observed aspect of the shiver!

Anybody who has ever seen the corresponding behaviour of the male chimpanzee defending his band or family with self-sacrificing courage, will doubt the purely spiritual character of human enthusiasm. The chimp, too, sticks out his chin, stiffens his body, and raises his elbows; his hair stands on end producing a terrifying magnification of his body contours as seen from the front. The inward rotation of his arms obviously has the purpose of turning the longest-haired side outwards to enhance the effect. The whole combination of body attitude and hair-raising constitutes a bluff. This is also seen when a cat humps its back, and is calculated to make the animal appear

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bigger and more dangerous than it really is. Our shiver which, in German poetry, is called a *heiliger Schauer*, which means a "holy shiver," turns out to be the vestige of a pre-human vegetative response of causing to bristle a fur which we no longer have.

To the humble seeker of biological truth there cannot be the slightest doubt that human militant enthusiasm evolved out of a communal defence response of our pre-human ancestors. The unthinking single-mindedness of the response must have been of high survival value even in a tribe of fully evolved human beings. It was necessary for the individual male to forget all his other allegiances in order to be able to dedicate himself, body and soul, to the cause of the communal battle.

THE OBJECT which militant enthusiasm tends to defend has changed with cultural development. Originally it was certainly the community of concrete, individually known members of a group, held together by the bond of personal love and friendship. With the growth of the social unit, the social norms and rites held in common by all its members became the main factor holding it together as an entity, and therewith they became automatically the symbol of the unit. By a process of true Pavlovian conditioning plus a certain amount of irreversible imprinting these rather abstract values have in every human culture been substituted for the primal, concrete object of the communal defence reaction.

This traditionally conditioned substitution of object has important consequences for the function of militant enthusiasm. On the one hand, the abstract nature of its object can give it a definitely inhuman aspect and make it positively dangerous—(what do I care for wife or child); on the other hand, it makes it possible to recruit militant enthusiasm into the service of really ethical values. Without the concentrated dedication of militant enthusiasm neither art, nor science, nor indeed any of the great endeavours of humanity would ever have come into being. Whether enthusiasm is made to serve these endeavours, or whether Man's most powerfully motivating instinct makes him go to war in some abjectly silly cause, depends almost entirely on the conditioning and/or imprinting he has undergone during certain susceptible periods of his life. There is reasonable hope that our moral responsibility may gain control over the primeval drive, but our only hope of it ever doing so rests on the humble recognition of the fact that militant enthusiasm is an instinctive response with a phylogenetically determined releasing mechanism, and that the only point at which intelligent and responsible supervision can get control is in the conditioning of the response to an object which proves to be a genuine value under the scrutiny of the categorical question.

LIKE THE TRIUMPH CEREMONY of the greylag goose, militant enthusiasm in Man is a true autonomous instinct: it has its own appetitive behaviour, its own releasing mechanisms and, like the sexual urge or any other strong instinct, it engenders a specific feeling of intense satisfaction. The strength of its seductive lure explains why intelligent men may behave as irrationally and immorally in their political as in their sexual lives. Like the triumph ceremony it has an essential influence on the social structure of the species. Humanity is not enthusiastically combative because it is split into political parties, but it is divided into opposing camps because this is the adequate stimulus situation to arouse militant enthusiasm in a satisfying manner. "If ever a doctrine of universal salvation should gain ascendancy over the whole earth to the exclusion of all others," writes Erich von Holst, "it would at once fall into two strongly opposing factions (one's own true one and the other heretical one) and hostility and war would thrive as before, mankind being—unfortunately—what it is!"

THE FIRST PREREQUISITE for rational control of an instinctive behaviour pattern is the knowledge of the stimulus situation which releases it. Militant enthusiasm can be elicited, with the predictability of a reflex, when the following environmental situations arise. First of all, a social unit with which the subject identifies himself must appear to be threatened by some danger from outside. That which is threatened may be a concrete group of people, the family, or a little community of close friends, or else it may be a larger social unit held together and symbolised by its own specific social norms and rites. As the latter assume the character of autonomous values they can, quite by themselves, represent the object in whose defence militant enthusiasm can be elicited. From all this it follows that this response can be brought into play in the service of extremely different objects, ranging

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from the sports club to the nation, or from the most obsolete mannerisms or ceremonials to the ideal of scientific truth or of the incorruptibility of justice.

A second key stimulus which contributes enormously to the releasing of intense militant enthusiasm is the presence of a hateful enemy from whom the threat to the above "values" emanates. This enemy, too, can be of a concrete or of an abstract nature. It can be "the" Jews, Huns, Boches, Tyrants, etc., or abstract concepts like world capitalism, bolshevism, fascism and any other kind of ism; it can be heresy, dogmatism, scientific fallacy or what not. Just as in the case of the object to be defended, the enemy against whom to defend it is extremely variable and demagogues are well versed in the dangerous art of producing supra-normal dummies to release a very dangerous form of militant enthusiasm.

A third factor contributing to the environmental situation eliciting the response is an inspiring leader-figure. Even the most emphatically anti-fascistic ideologies apparently cannot do without it, as the giant pictures of leaders displayed by all kinds of political parties prove clearly enough. Again the unselectivity of the phylogenetically programmed response allows for a wide variation in the conditioning to a leader-figure. Napoleon, about whom so critical a man as Heinrich Heine became so enthusiastic, does not inspire me in the least; Charles Darwin does.

A fourth, and perhaps the most important prerequisite for the full eliciting of militant enthusiasm is the presence of many other individuals all agitated by the same emotion. Their absolute number has a certain influence on the quality of the response. Smaller numbers at issue with a large majority tend to obstinate defence with the emotional value of "making a last stand" while very large numbers inspired by the same enthusiasm feel an urge to conquer the whole world in the name of their sacred cause. Here the laws of mass enthusiasm are strictly analogous to those of flock formation I have seen; here, too, the excitation grows in proportion, perhaps even in geometrical progression, to the increasing number of individuals. This is exactly what makes militant mass enthusiasm so dangerous.

I HAVE TRIED TO DESCRIBE, with as little emotional bias as possible, the human response of enthusiasm, its phylogenetic origin, its instinctive as well as its traditionally handed-down components and prerequisites. I hope to have made the reader realise, without actually saying so, what a jumble our philosophy of values is. What is a culture? A system of historically developed social norms and rites which are passed on from generation to generation because emotionally they are felt to be values. What is a value? Obviously, normal and healthy people are able to appreciate something as a high value for which to live and, if necessary, to die, for no other reason than that it was evolved in cultural ritualisation and handed down to them by a revered elder. Is, then, a value only defined as the object on which our instinctive urge to preserve and defend traditional social norms has become fixated? Primarily and in the early stages of cultural development this indubitably was the case. The obvious advantages of loyal adherence to tradition must have exerted a considerable selection pressure. However, the greatest loyalty and obedience to culturally ritualised norms of behaviour must not be mistaken for responsible morality. Even at their best they are only functionally analogous to behaviour controlled by rational responsibility. In this respect they are no whit different from instinctive patterns of social behaviour. Also they are just as prone to miscarry under circumstances for which they have not been "programmed" by the great constructor, natural selection.

In other words, the need to control, by wise rational responsibility, all our emotional allegiances to cultural values is as great as, if not greater than, the necessity to keep in check our other instincts. None of them can ever have such devastating effects as unbridled militant enthusiasm when it infects great masses and overrides all other considerations by its single-mindedness and its specious nobility. It is not enthusiasm in itself that is in any way noble, but humanity's great goals which it can be called upon to defend.

That indeed is the Janus head of Man: the only being capable of dedicating himself to the very highest moral and ethical values requires for this purpose a phylogenetically adapted mechanism of behaviour whose animal properties bring with them the danger that he will kill his brother, convinced that he is doing so in the interest of these very same high values. *Ecce homo!*

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Poems by George Seferis

Narration

That man walks along weeping
no one knows why
sometimes they think he's weeping for lost loves
like those that torture us so much
on summer beaches with the gramophones.

Other people go about their business
endless paper, children growing up, women
ageing awkwardly.
He has two eyes like poppies
like cut spring poppies
and two trickles in the corners of his eyes.

He walks along the streets, never lies down
striding small squares on the earth's back
instrument of a boundless pain
that's finally lost all significance.

Some have heard him speak
to himself as he passed by
about mirrors broken years ago
about broken forms in the mirrors
that no one can ever put together again.
Others have heard him talk about sleep
images of horror on the threshold of sleep
faces unbearable in their tenderness.

We've grown used to him, he's presentable and quiet
only that he walks along weeping continually
like willows on a riverbank you see from the train
as you wake uncomfortably some clouded dawn.

We've grown used to him; like everything else you're used to
he doesn't stand for anything
and I talk to you about him because I can't find
anything that you're not used to;
I pay my respects.

Memory, II

Ephesus

He spoke while sitting on what seemed to be
the marble remnant of an ancient gate;
endless the plain on the right and empty,
on the left the last shadows moved down the mountain:
"The poem is everywhere. Your voice
sometimes travels beside it
like a dolphin keeping company for a while

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with a golden sloop in the sunlight,
then vanishing again. The poem is everywhere,
like the wings of the wind moved by the wind
to touch for a moment the seagull's wings.
The same as our lives yet different too,
as a woman's face changes yet remains the same
after she strips naked. He who has loved
knows this; in the light that other people see things,
the world spoils; but you remember this:
Hades and Dionysus are the same."
He spoke and then took the main road
that leads to the old harbour, devoured now
under the rushes there. The twilight
as if ready for the death of some animal,
so naked was it.

I remember still:
he was travelling to Ionian shores,
to empty shells of theatres
where only the lizard slithers over the dry stones,
and I asked him: "Will they be full again some day?"
and he answered: "Maybe, at the hour of death."
And he ran across the orchestra howling
"Let me hear my brother!"
And the silence surrounding us was harsh,
leaving no trace at all on the glass of the blue.

Our Sun

This sun was mine and yours; we shared it.
Who's suffering behind the golden silk, who's dying?
A woman beating her dry breasts cried out: "Cowards,
they've taken my children and torn them to shreds, you've killed them
gazing at the fire-flies at dusk with a strange look,
lost in blind thought."
The blood was drying on a hand that a tree made green,
a warrior was asleep clutching the lance that flared against his side.

It was ours, this sun, we saw nothing behind the gold embroidery
then the messengers came, dirty and breathless,
stuttering unintelligible words
twenty days and nights on the barren earth with thorns only
twenty days and nights feeling the bellies of the horses bleeding
and not a moment's break to drink the rain water.
You told them to rest first and then to speak, the light had blinded you.
They died saying: "We don't have the time," touching some rays of the sun.
You'd forgotten that no one rests.

A woman howled "Cowards", like a dog in the night.
Once she would have been beautiful like you
with wet mouth, veins alive under the skin,
with love.

This sun was ours; you kept all of it, you didn't want to follow me.
And it was then I found out about those things behind the gold and the silk:
we don't have the time. The messengers were right.

Translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Column

THREE years ago ENCOUNTER published, in a special number edited by Arthur Koestler, an enquiry into the condition of Britain entitled *Suicide of a Nation?* It suggested that Britain was passing through a profound crisis, tried to diagnose its symptoms and argued that without changes as profound as the crisis itself Britain was unlikely to overcome it successfully. *Suicide of a Nation?* had, predictably, a very mixed reception. By many it was regarded as an exercise in the deplorable practice of what our Prime Minister calls "knocking Britain." There were some who, like Mr. Robert Pitman, suggested that Mr. Koestler had no business to criticise his adopted country; if any criticism was needed, they felt, it should be left to true-blue Englishmen. Mr. Koestler might well have replied that it was precisely because true-blue Englishmen had ceased of be capable of self-criticism that he had felt it necessary to undertake the task himself.

Yet re-reading *Suicide of a Nation?* today, one feels that in some ways it represented an almost uncanny prophecy of, and an attempt to forestall, the situation in which we find ourselves today, in which even Mr. Wilson has been forced to recognise that after eighteen months of his special form of "government with guts" there is still something deeply and seriously wrong with us. It seems laughable now to remember that 1963, when *Suicide of a Nation?* was published, was National Productivity Year, the grand campaign by which the united forces of enlightenment, headed by the Duke of Edinburgh, were going to drag Britain into the twenty-first century. It seemed typical of the situation which *Suicide of a Nation?* tried to analyse that the campaign was inaugurated by a broadcast in which the Duke announced that, *pour encourager les autres,* time-and-motion merchants were to be introduced into Buckingham Palace.

It need hardly be said that the spate of oratory, the flood of exhortation and admonition, the elaborate organisation of conferences and committees which constituted National Productivity Year passed over the surface of English life without leaving a ripple behind; it certainly did not succeed in penetrating into those lower depths which needed to be stirred if radical changes were to be made. At the time I compared it to Count Leinsdorf's great "Collateral Campaign" in Robert Musil's novel *The Man Without Qualities,* which, in 1914, was to be "a magnificent demonstration of the spirit of Austria," a "lofty symbol that would be at once an admonition and a signal for a change of heart," all the more impressive because no one, and least of all Count Leinsdorf, really knew what it was all about.

IT IS INDEED TEMPTING to regard the crisis, which has continued until today, to which the National Productivity Year was so inadequate a response with the same kind of irony, cynicism and, ultimately, despair with which Musil contemplated the death throes of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Indeed, sometimes one feels that this is precisely how Parliament does regard it, while there is something strictly Viennese in the ordinary Englishman's view of the situation as desperate, but not serious. When the pretensions of those who govern are daily and mercilessly exposed by the consequences of their policies, what else is there to do but laugh and enjoy oneself as long as one can? And how could one study without cynicism that politician's *vade mecum* of words and phrases which is predictably drawn upon whenever Britain's situation looks, as it recurrently does, rather worse than before. That marvellous dialogue which Bouvard and Pecuchet engaged in on their park bench cannot compare in absurdity with the dialogue between government and opposition on the parliamentary benches. It is a dialogue in which the public has no part; fortunately for us perhaps, because otherwise we should be forced to share in its absurdity; but unfortunately also, because so long as it continues in its present form, there is not likely to be any change in our condition.

IT IS NOW THREE YEARS, three governments, and two general elections later than the farce of National Productivity Year, and it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that in that time not one single thing has been done to change fundamentally the situation which provoked the Duke of Edinburgh to such desperate measures in the Palace. Indeed, as I write, the crisis which by now has become endemic in British life appears to have broken out with even greater virulence than before and provoked yet another application of those deflationary measures which have been applied to us so often that one suspects we may have become immune to them.

Indeed, it might be said that the medicine itself has now added a new symptom to the disease. The contradiction between Mr. Wilson's

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

professions and his present policy, between the expansionist programme on which he was elected and the deflationary measures he is now applying, his socialism in theory and his conservatism in practice, has by now become so glaring that it adds one more element of confusion to the bewilderment of the electorate, which is in itself one of the most acute symptoms of the troubles from which we are suffering. A people which has twice voted into office a government pledged by the most specific and binding promises to promote growth and maintain full employment must be forgiven if it fails to understand when that same government, after eighteen months in office, resorts to policies which are in every respect the direct opposite of what it has promised. The ordinary citizen has no means of explaining to himself how so complete a reversal could have taken place in so short time. It is no explanation to say that this change has been forced on the government by a critical situation. For that situation existed both before and after Mr. Wilson became Prime Minister, and it was precisely that situation which he promised to cure by the policies which he has now abandoned, in favour of those which he has repeatedly and consistently denounced both in opposition and in government.

*

"THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG with our bloody ships today," said Beatty at Jutland, as Admiral Hipper blew his battle-cruisers out of the water. In this very British phrase, and in this very British way, he was acknowledging, though without understanding why, that the ships of the British navy, the pride of the nation, were inferior in design, in construction, in armament and in gunnery to those of the High Seas Fleet. These ships were believed to be, and were claimed by Churchill and Fisher to be, the finest products of British industry, of British brains and British workmanship, of British advanced technology. What the dramatic confrontation at Jutland revealed was that at that date Britain was already on the decline, industrially and technologically, by comparison with the more advanced industrialised countries like Germany and the United States, and that decline has continued until the present day. Equally, from that day until today, the basic causes of that decline have continued to operate.

Mr. Corelli Barnett, in the chapters devoted to Jutland in his admirable book, *The Sword Bearers* (now available as a Penguin), has related the defeat of Beatty's battle-cruisers at Jutland to the failure to provide any adequate system of technical education, and contrasts Germany's ten technical high schools of university rank with 14,143 students, at that date, with the position in Britain: no technical high schools of university rank, and 31 recognised technical institutions with a total of 2,768 students. In 1909, the report of H.M. Inspectors of Schools stated: "The slow growth of these technical institutions is, however, in the main to be ascribed to the small demand in this country for the services of young men well-trained in the theoretical side of industrial operations and in the services underlying them."

The long-term consequences of this neglect of technical education are still with us, and no serious attempt has yet been made to put them right. How far we are from adapting our educational system to the demands of a technological century was reflected in a singular ceremony which recently took place in Brighton. The occasion was the ceremony of conferring degrees at the university on recipients, who included Mr. Wilson, garbed in furred, saffron-yellow academic dress designed by Hardy Amies, and looking like a male chorus from Gilbert and Sullivan. In the course of the oratory which accompanies such occasions, while the Prime Minister castigated "wet" journalism and the "knock Britain" brigade, the Vice-Chancellor made the astonishing claim that the universities possessed a monopoly of the brains of the country and constituted an élite to which we must all look for our salvation. I thought of a speech which I once heard Frank Lloyd Wright make on a similar occasion; it ended with the words: "God help us all."

The arrogance of the Vice-Chancellor's claim gave the *opéra bouffe* of the proceedings at Brighton a slightly sinister quality. For Sussex, after all, is the brightest swinging star of that constellation of those new academic institutions on which so many hopes for the future are being pinned, a kind of Mary Quant of the new universities, and if indeed so new and mini-skirted an institution still clings to the academic mumbo-jumbo of the past and sees as its task the creation of a new élite based on a monopoly of the brains of the nation, where indeed are we to look for salvation? For what is wanted in Britain today is not a new élite: we have already suffered too long from too many élites. Nor do we want a situation where the nation's brains are monopolised by the universities. What is wanted is that there should be trained and educated brains on factory benches, in steel works and shipyards, in mines and mills, technically equipped for the tasks of modern industry and capable of understanding the social and political issues that they involve. We are

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as far from creating a system of national education capable of producing such a result as we ever were, and there are moments when one fears that all the resources which are being invested in our universities may take us even further away from it.

*

TO REVERSE a trend which has been continuous throughout this century is in fact a task requiring a gigantic concentration of effort and energy, and I do not believe that any of the exhortations and admonitions which are daily addressed to us ever sufficiently emphasise what an immense, indeed almost impossible task it is. For such lay sermons, while telling us that change is necessary, also hasten to reassure us, as if otherwise the shock might be too great, that after all the change required is only a small one; or, in the jargon they like to use, a "marginal" one. It only requires a "marginal" increase in our exports to restore the balance of our trade; it only requires a "marginal" increase in "productivity" to achieve the "norms" envisaged in that National Plan which now reads like a blueprint for utopia; it only requires a "marginal" increase in "gross national output" to introduce us into the brave new world which Mr. Wilson has so frequently promised us.

The audience to which these sermons are addressed, composed for the most part of men and women to whom the corrupt economic jargon they use normally means absolutely nothing, on the whole concludes that if the additional effort demanded is as small as it would appear, the crisis which it is intended to cure cannot really be a very serious one; indeed, looking round at the solid evidence of the prosperity they have recently acquired, at the refrigerator and television set and the washing-machine and the motor-car, they are inclined to believe that there is no crisis in any real sense at all, that the periodic injections of deflation to which they are subjected are merely a side-effect of some curious form of hysteria which seizes on their rulers from time to time, and will pass away once the fit is over.

Such reactions should surprise no one. Equally, it should surprise no one if Mr. Wilson's last package deal of deflation produces no more effect than the more modest ones of the past. If Churchill after Dunkirk had assured people that he only required a "marginal" contribution of blood, sweat, and tears, the response he would have inspired would have been at best an apathetic one. He was able to secure the response he did because he made a total demand on people's energies; because he was able to appeal to profound instincts, in which self-preservation and self-sacrifice were strangely combined; and also because in the past he had repeatedly and consistently warned his countrymen of the dangers by which they were surrounded and which now confronted them in the most tangible form.

Mr. Wilson has on occasions shown signs of wishing to appeal to the same instincts as Churchill. It has not been a very convincing performance because no one really believes that our situation in any way resembles Dunkirk, and indeed Mr. Wilson himself has repeatedly assured us that it does not. Even more, it has failed to carry conviction because Mr. Wilson has not earned the right to use the kind of words to which such instincts respond. He cannot appeal to self-sacrifice because the policies he has so persuasively preached, a socialist version of *Enrichissez-vous*, have been based on quite other instincts. He cannot appeal to self-preservation, because he has so repeatedly assured us that the policies he preaches were a sure remedy for all discontents. He cannot even appeal to that kind of faith and trust which, in moments of danger, people will place in an individual, as they did in Churchill, because by now his words and his policy are in such flagrant contradiction with everything that has gone before.

No doubt Mr. Wilson, who is nothing if not resourceful, may attempt all these appeals, especially if the gnomes in Zurich refuse to believe in the sincerity of his conversion to their own form of financial orthodoxy. He has, after all persecuted it for so long, and at heart he remains Saul rather than Paul. But it is impossible that, in his mouth, such appeals can excite anything except a half-hearted response. In many, indeed, like Mr. Frank Cousins, they will inspire nothing but incredulity and bitter opposition, as one weapon drawn from his armoury of political gimmicks; in some, merely cynicism; in some, laughter. Morally, Mr. Wilson's cupboard is bare, and the poor dog will have to starve.

*

EPPUR SI MUOVE! A committee of the Arts Council has, it appears, recommended the abolition of the Lord Chamberlain's powers of theatrical censorship. But, presumably because this affects matters of the highest policy, of the sacred founts of public morality, of the Throne itself, the committee's report, according to a newspaper report, is to remain secret and "will not be published." One step forward, two steps back.

This is of course entirely understandable. By abolishing the Lord Chamberlain's powers of theatrical censorship, one is really touching the

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sacra arcana of the British constitution. For his responsibility was originally exercised on his behalf, in the age of another Elizabeth, by the Master of the Revels, a figure so deeply rooted in so long and so murky a past that to have anything to do with him is like trafficking with the powers of darkness. No wonder the Arts Council, and Miss Jennie Lee, who I am sure would not like such things, deliberate in secret.

In the reign of Elizabeth I and James I, this wild mythological character, the direct progenitor, unlikely as it seems, of our present Lord Chamberlain, embodied himself in Edward Tilney, whose responsibility was "to order and reform, authorise and put down" plays and players. He exercised this mandate in the spirit one would expect of any Master of the Revels who was mindful of his ancestors. That is, on behalf of the Court he protected the theatre against the puritan feelings of the City, which would have liked to close down the theatre altogether as a centre of infection, idleness, lechery, and lewd behaviour. As so often, hygiene and morality went together. When the Master of the Revels "allowed" a play to be performed, it was safe against such attacks. Tilney concentrated his attention on theatrical offences against religious orthodoxy and loyalty to the throne; morality he did not much mind about. In this, one feels the Lord Chamberlain today is his true successor. In time, his authority came to cover the printing of a play, though under Elizabeth I the licensing of books was regulated by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, in practice by the clergy of St. Paul's, who do not seem to have taken the job seriously. Perhaps it was because, unlike the Master of the Revels, they were not paid at piece-work rates or given occasional bribes.

There is little doubt that the theatre profited by these arrangements. Their censor was also their protector; legally, as well as in the Chicago sense. The principal theatrical companies, like Shakespeare's, were in law the servants of the Lord Chamberlain, and worked in close collaboration with his officer, the Master of the Revels. Both he and Shakespeare took a hand in the rewriting of *Sir Thomas More*; Tilney's concern was to avoid inflaming contemporary feelings against French immigrants, and to cut dialogue in which More refused to obey the orders of the King.

James I, who was extremely fond of the theatre, at the beginning of his reign gave the players a freedom which even allowed them to mimic his way of speaking and mock at his various bad habits. But he became increasingly sensitive to the theatre's habit of taking liberties whenever they are granted them. Chapman and Ben Jonson were both jailed for sneering at Scotsmen. As a concession to Puritanism he closed the theatres on Sunday, and by forbidding open profanity on the stage had an effect on the language of some of Shakespeare's plays.

Shakespeare himself had considerable experience of the arbitrariness and venality of the revels. He himself was not averse to taking a bribe to risk its displeasure. Elizabeth I disliked being compared with Richard II, as a weak ruler. In February 1601, his company was paid forty shillings to present *Richard II*, though they thought it old hat, by friends of the Earl of Essex who thought it might win support for the Earl's insurrection. The performance was not in fact judged to be seditious.

The office of the Master of the Revels was an arbitrary and high-handed institution. Yet it followed a fairly clear political line, in applying censorship to anything that was thought dangerous to public order and the policies of the establishment. And it was certainly less hostile to the freedom of the theatre than the puritanism of the City and the middle class, who if they had had their way would have abolished the theatre altogether.

THE CURIOUS ORIGINS of the Lord Chamberlain's powers of theatrical censorship, and the way in which they have been applied in the past, have led some people to defend them, on the ground that their arbitrariness gives the theatre a freedom which it would not otherwise possess. As Peacock said of the British constitution, its very rottenness gives it elasticity. There is something to be said for this point; though it also illustrates the English instinct for believing that some institution which worked fairly well under Elizabeth I must also work well under Elizabeth II. What is fascinating, of course, is that the Arts Council should feel that their reasons for advocating the abolition of the Lord Chamberlain touch on such matters that they must remain secret.

R

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THEATRE

Ideas and the Drama

By John Weightman

THE THEATRE critics have come in for some severe drubbings recently in the correspondence columns of the newspapers, and two late-night teach-ins have even been organised—one at the Jeanetta Cochrane Theatre after the flare-up about Osborne's *A Bond Honoured* and the other at the Aldwych Theatre after a performance of Mrozek's *Tango*—for the express purpose of correcting the unfavourable impressions of these plays that might have been created by some hostile, and therefore presumably inadequate, press notices. The critics were invited to come along and have their noses rubbed in their ignorance and stupidity, while at the same time authors and men of the theatre proposed to address the audience directly about their aims and achievements.

As a positive move, the first occasion was a fiasco, a clear case of *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark. Mr. Osborne, who had been billed as the star attraction, did not turn up, and the proceedings were dominated by a critic, Mr Jack Lambert, who improvised a brilliant monologue on the autonomous function of criticism. It was rather as if the judge had failed to appear and the criminal in the dock were haranguing the court with superior wit and intelligence, like a character in a Shaw play. On the second occasion too, the main theatrical star, Mr. Peter Hall, sent apologies for absence, and it was left to Mr. Martin Esslin, the B.B.C.'s Director of Drama, to give us a good, solid lecturette on the ideological significance of *Tango*, which he presented as one of the most important European works of the last ten years. This would have been an excellent beginning to a discussion in a seminar group of about ten or fifteen students, or to a "Brains Trust" type of exchange between half-a-dozen specialists on the platform. As it was, the thread of the argument soon got lost among the desultory interventions from the floor, and the evening fizzled out inconclusively. It is idle to suppose that a discussion can be conducted with participation by a mass audience, and one would have expected theatre people to devise their onslaught on the critics with a better sense of theatrical effectiveness.

As a temporary critic, who is not wildly enthusiastic about either *A Bond Honoured* or the English version of *Tango*, I remain unmoved by what I heard from the other side. But the experience, coupled with the fact that there are a number of "plays of ideas" (including three Shaw revivals) running in London at the moment, has led me to wonder again about what one should expect from the intellectual or ideological content of the drama. Are "plays of ideas" really about ideas, and do we need to understand and accept the ideas in order to enjoy them? This is an old question which has been asked, from time to time, about various departments of literature, such as the novel and didactic poetry, where ideas are more prevalent. The traditional complaint about the theatre has always been that it is poor in ideas, and various reformers—Shaw in particular—have striven to inject ideas into it. Now, in the present theatrical boom, we have a large body of theatrical practitioners who maintain that their theatre, or the new European theatre, is full of ideas which the critics are too obtuse or uneducated to understand. This is worrying. Why is it, I ask myself, that I fail to respond to *Tango* as Mr Esslin obviously thinks I should? I am interested in ideas; I love watching actors act (and the general standard of performance must be higher now than ever before in the history of the theatre); I want to be transported, but so many niggling objections keep interfering with my enjoyment.

IT IS EASY ENOUGH to see that *Tango* is an "important" play, in that it crystallises a certain moment of Polish, and perhaps of European, history. The central figure, Arthur, a young man between 25 and 30, is our old friend the Existentialist hero again, but he represents an advance on Leonido of *A Bond Honoured*,

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

since he has got beyond the fight against meaningless convention and is now struggling to "structure" the flux of the Absurd. His parents, in fact, are elderly Leonidos, who have survived from the inter-war period of anti-conventionalism. His father, a flabby, middle-aged Bohemian, spends his time devising "happenings." (Incidentally, it is interesting to note that "happenings" are considered old hat in Warsaw, whereas in Paris they still attract the attention of the press.) His mother, an emancipated woman of the Lawrentian generation, enthuses about the splendidly natural brutishness of her proletarian lover, whom she has installed in the household. This couple's libertarian softness has also affected the grandmother (who wears slacks) and the old officer uncle (who wears shorts). Arthur revolts against the chaos of the family, with its clutter of disparate objects and its anarchic individualism, and his first move is to put the clock back to 19th-century formalism. He proposes to his young cousin on bended knee, forces his family into old-fashioned wedding clothes, and turns the proletarian lover into a dutiful servant. In this, he is aided by his great-uncle, the ex-officer, who is delighted to return to the conventions of his youth. But then, on the wedding day, Arthur comes home drunk; he has had a sudden revelation of the impossibility of returning to outmoded principles. What, then, is there left for him to do? All he can find to believe in is power; he has imposed his will on his family in forcing them to accept convention; he can continue to assert his will in arbitrary fashion, using the proletarian thug as his secular arm. This, I take it, is the pure exercise of Existentialist freedom in the form of destructive neo-Nietzscheanism (*cf.* Camus's *Caligula* and the random revolver shots of the Surrealists). But at this point, his fiancée pricks his egotistic bubble by announcing (truthfully or untruthfully?) that she has been unfaithful to him with the proletarian. Arthur collapses, and the proletarian takes over as simple brute force and kills Arthur by striking him on the back of the neck like a rabbit. The uncultured thug now rules the household; the great-uncle gravitates towards him because he represents true power and, while Arthur's body is borne away, the two of them dance a tango which appears to symbolise the alliance between the old brainless discipline of the army and the new dictatorship of genitals and muscle.

Mr Esslin says that when he saw this play in Warsaw, the tenseness of the atmosphere in the theatre made him realise what it must have been like to attend a performance of Beaumarchais' *Le Mariage de Figaro* just before the French Revolution. No doubt, for the Polish audience, the play is full of immediate references which rivet the attention. At the Aldwych, the atmosphere was not nearly so tense and, for my part, although I think I understood the ideas of the play more or less as Mr. Esslin was to expound them later, I found that its dramatic force was no more than intermittent.

I can see that this is the same kind of play as *Le Mariage de Figaro* or *The Cherry Orchard, i.e.*, it uses the strains and stresses inside a single household to represent the dilemma of a whole society. The central question is clear enough: if, on the one hand, you cannot return to 19th-century formalism and, on the other, think that 20th-century emancipation leads to chaos, what are you to put your trust in? It is also clear that no play can deal adequately, on the intellectual level, with so vast a problem. In fact, the "play of ideas" can never *solve* the problem it poses; it can merely present it as an intellectual-*cum*-emotional experience, and such resolution as occurs cannot be more than aesthetic. However, the aesthetic resolution may be satisfactory or unsatisfactory. *Le Mariage de Figaro* and *The Cherry Orchard* are both masterpieces depicting the final breakdown of decadent feudal relationships under the pressure of the modern world. The first ends "happily," with the representatives of the various classes singing and dancing in joyful reconciliation; of course, this final scene quickly took on a tragic irony that far transcended Beaumarchais' intention, since the guillotine was set up only a few years later. The second ends sadly, with the sound of the cherry trees being felled and the death of the old retainer, Firs, who has been forgotten by his feckless masters. Neither play "solves" the problem (if you take the tragic view, no solution was ever possible), but both leave it in the mind as a satisfactory object of contemplation, with a wealth of correctly related psychological overtones.

I DON'T FEEL that *Tango* achieves anything like such a balanced construction. For one thing, Mrozek brings in elements from the Theatre of the Absurd that are not always thoroughly blended with the action. It is excellent to have the young girl conducting a love-scene in a nightdress and a man's bowler hat, because the combination emphasises her indifference to forms in an apparently accidental way; it is wrong, I think, for Arthur to force his grandmother to lie down on the coffin (*i.e.*, to die symbolically) when she has displeased him, because the device is too deliberately "absurd." Unlike Beaumarchais and Chekhov,

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mrozek is not always feeling the situation primarily as a dramatic reality; he is grasping the idea and then consciously adding the device to create the effect, and the join is visible. This point relates to another principle: the "play of ideas" may begin from an intellectual perception, but if the spectator guesses the idea before its dramatic enactment has been completed, the idea comes away in his hand, as it were, and the play itself is impoverished.

A more serious reservation is that the general development of the theme does not provide a sensation of intellectual rightness. Act I, which presents the confused, libertarian household that Arthur finds emotionally and intellectually so exasperating, makes its points firmly enough, if rather obviously. Act II, in which Arthur woos his cousin through genuine desire and at the same time tries to resuscitate social forms, contains the funniest and most moving passages, because Arthur's thirst for a recognisable social pattern in which to insert his individual love and jealousy is a universal aspiration, admirably expressed in theatrical terms. If the whole play had been on the level of Act II, I could have seen it as the great work that Mr. Esslin says it is. But Act III is a let-down. By opting for the hysterical exercise of power, Arthur is not discovering something new in the 1960s; he is falling back on the essence of Nazism, in so far as Nazism emerged from the inter-war awareness of the Absurd, and—as has been brought home to us recently by so many fashionable trends—he is really reviving an attitude which goes back as far as the Marquis de Sade, and was produced in the Marquis by the effect of 18th-century scepticism on his peculiar temperament. I may be wrong, but I should expect someone who sees the disadvantages of anarchism, and has the lessons of contemporary history before him, to know all about the temptations of pure power; all this is now very banal. In any case, the dilemma is false: we are not obliged to choose between a return to morning-coats and top-hats on the one hand and indulgence in arbitrary power on the other, and the switch on Arthur's part is theatrical in the bad sense. One cannot sympathise with his predicament at this point because, unlike the main characters in *Le Mariage* and *The Cherry Orchard*, Almaviva, Figaro, Ranevskaya or Lopakhin, he is acting below the level of his implied intelligence. I am not saying that he should find the solution to his problem; I mean that the author should be holding the problem firmly in focus and devising a satisfactory dramatic expression for it. How this might be done, I am incapable of saying, of course, because this is the point at which logical argument has to be superseded by imaginative invention; but logical argument can show that imaginative invention is missing.

THE WHOLE OF THE LAST ACT savours of theatrical arrangement. Why is Arthur's fiancée unfaithful to him, or why does she say she is, if she isn't? Not through any convincing motivation, but simply to break him down, so that the action can be brought to a close. Why does the proletarian take over? He cannot signify Communist dictatorship because, in the English version, he is a crass gigolo-spiv who has no ideology and shows no flicker of intelligence until the last scene. Perhaps he is a rather different social type in the original Polish. If he isn't, his initiative is again just a device to wind up the action. And why this particular dance at the end? The tango is a sexual display dance of an essentially masculine/feminine character. Its peculiar kind of flamboyance is inappropriate to the situation, because its very stylish aesthetic form has nothing to do with the crude strength of the proletarian's dominance. For that matter, why should the play be called *Tango*? Because it shows the dance of the social classes? But again the tango is the wrong kind of dance, since it is a stereotyped expression of courtship evolved in a traditionally conventional Catholic society; in fact, the tango is a phenomenon of much the same order as the morning-coats and top-hats that poor Arthur was nostalgic about. I suspect that Mrozek is just bringing it in as an "absurd" touch to make an effective ending, without bothering about these implications. But the implications matter because the Absurd of the Theatre has to be different from the random Absurd of Life; it can function without being immediately intelligible, but it should not arouse immediate intellectual objections. Such objections are not important in themselves because, I repeat, it is not the primary business of the theatre to produce an intellectual effect; however, they operate as so much grit in the aesthetic machine.

How far the weaknesses I think I see in Acts I and III are due to the fact that this is an English translation and adaptation of a play that is presumably rooted in Polish local colour, I don't know. I have simply given my reaction to the English performance, in which only Act II showed a satisfactory aesthetic handling of intellectual attitudes. I had meant to go on to argue that something rather different happens in the three current Shaw productions. Shaw is an ideas man on one level, but while the ideas buzz in the dialogue, the action and characterisation may be operating with different implications on another level. But I have more than used up my space and must leave these considerations for another time.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Take that Perique
in Three Nuns Tobacco:

First
we cut it, hang it,
separate it, clean it, twist it,
and then place it snugly
into oak barrels.

Then we apply pressure to bathe
the leaves in their own juice.

Two weeks later
we rework it, untwist it,
air it, then retwist it.

We do this at least three times,
often more often.

We do all these very
complicated things so that when
you put Three Nuns in your pipe and
smoke it, you'll simply enjoy it.

6/11½ the ounce

TN88D

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COLOUR-WISE

The colour advertisements appearing in this issue are built up from only four process colours—yellow, red, blue and black—as shown on this page. By means of special blocks these basic colours can be combined to give an unlimited range of colour. But colour advertising, however well designed, only successfully fulfils its function if displayed in the right circumstances. That is why colour-wise advertisers use ENCOUNTER. Britain's "most lively and influential magazine" puts them in touch with 100,000 quality-conscious readers. Here the extra impact of colour really counts.

For details of rates write to:

THE ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER

ENCOUNTER · 25 HAYMARKET · LONDON SW1

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES & TOPICS

Looking for the Road

THE RECENT CONFRONTATION of the French and British heads of government and Foreign Ministers was a strangely unequal affair. On the French side, M. Pompidou and M. Couve de Murville came seeking nothing and equally sure to give nothing away. Mr. Wilson and Mr. Stewart, on the other hand, were desperately anxious to probe French views on the one subject bound to be discussed which was both highly controversial and vitally important to Britain's future, a British entry into the European Economic Community. It was always certain that during these London talks they were going to learn nothing on this question, and receive nothing. Where entry into the Common Market is concerned, the policy of the present Labour Government is inchoate and porous. That of the French Government is clear as crystal, hard as a diamond.

M. Pompidou and M. Couve de Murville made this perfectly plain in London. The French have laid down one unalterable condition for British entry—that Britain will accept the Treaty of Rome, the charter of the Common Market, as it stands, along with all the rules and regulations derived from the Treaty. It is typical of the evasive official attitude that British spokesmen have been insturcted to point out that Britain cannot "sign" the Treaty, because that document relates to six, and not seven (or more) partners. This is prevarication; the French realise that some *re-wording* of the Treaty would be needed, but they demand that its *content* should not be touched.

In private conversation France's leaders have underlined the need for Britain to accept all the duties and responsibilities of membership of the Common Market, without reservation and by means of a firm and clear declaration of intent. M. Pompidou and M. Couve de Murville did not ask for such a declaration of intent while they were in London. Indeed, it remains highly probable that France does *not* want Britain in the Common Market at all. There are half a dozen reasons for excluding Britain. With Britain in, France's accepted supremacy in the counsels of the Community would be threatened. Her concept of the Community as an economic closed shop, instead of an expanding free-trade zone, would be badly shaken. Her quest for European independence of the United States would suffer a setback.

France's agricultural policies would be endangered, for Britain would inevitably try to negotiate favourable terms of entry into the Common Market area of Commonwealth produce, and who can doubt that Europeans will, in time, appreciate the immense potentialities of the "White Commonwealth" as an area for investment, for marketing goods, and for disposing of surplus population? With Britain in the Common Market, France's dream of a hard currency area, based on a new gold standard, would almost certainly disappear. To these largely unspoken thoughts the French leaders added, during the London talks, a new objection—that Britain's shaky economy would be a liability to the Community and would have to be reorganised before a British entry.

In the face of this last objection Mr. Wilson's effort to explain that the British economy was being successfully put on its feet must rank as one of the most futile diplomatic exposés ever assayed. M. Couve de Murville shrugged it off with uncompromising indifference, M. Pompidou with a good deal of Gallic charm. France's leaders were in no doubt about the imminence of an economic crisis.

One must return to the key question of an unequivocal, unconditional British declaration of intent. So far, all that Mr. Wilson has done has been to instruct his lieutenants, Mr. George Brown, Mr. Michael Stewart, Mr. George Thomson, to make encouraging noises, in Stockholm, Bonn, Paris, and elsewhere. But their speeches, too, have reiterated prior conditions for an application for membership—special treatment of Britain's trade with the Commonwealth, renegotiation of the agricultural arrangements of the Common Market, assertion of Britain's right to plan her own economy and maintain her own foreign policy and, most ridiculous of all, the assurance of the Six that no barrier would be placed in the way of a British entry. In private conversation, M. Couve de Murville has referred to these prior conditions with typically sardonic humour. If a man, he says, wants to marry a girl, he proposes and tells her that he loves her. He does not link his offer of marriage with the suggestion that her parents should supply their country cottage and a monthly allowance. Above all, he does not tell the girl, in advance, that he will not propose at all unless he is given a guarantee that he will be accepted. . . .

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN if Mr. Wilson gave the unequivocal, unconditional declaration of intent to accept the Treaty of Rome? For reasons already given it is virtually certain that France would not welcome such a declaration. But the remaining five of the Six would. France's leaders

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pretend that cold, cunning British diplomacy has been designed to drive a wedge between France and her Common Market partners, and has lent credence to the "myth" of the "Friendly Five." It might even be a relief to believe that British diplomacy was capable of such *raison d'être*, such modest Machiavellianism. But there have been far too many signs that the Foreign Office is turning into a tongue-tied Tommy Tortoise, deprived of all independence of mind and action by the heavy hand of No. 10, Downing Street. Certainly, there has been no coherent Foreign Office campaign against France. Five of the Common Market Six want Britain in for their own good reasons.

Here, then, lies the significance of a declaration of intent. As long as it is not made, and by Mr. Wilson in person and on behalf of his country, the French can assert that there is no serious British resolve to abide by the rules of the Common Market and that Britain would join only in order first to water it down, and then to wreck it. The Five remain powerless to protest, powerless to do anything to help Britain. They can only murmur surreptitious encouragement into the unreceptive ears of British diplomats who retort that they, the Five, are doing far too little to help Britain in.

If the British declaration of intent were made, however, it is a fair assumption that the Five would do everything in their power to help Britain in during the tough and tortuous negotiations which would have in any case to take place. For Britain would, naturally, have the right to negotiate her terms of entry, just as all the members of the Six did. Equally, Britain would have the right to withdraw her application for membership, if fair terms could not be secured. This, again, applied to all of the Six. To revert to M. Couve de Murville's analogy, engagements can be broken off by mutual consent.

A further point should be stressed. During the lectures which they gave to Britain's leaders in London, M. Pompidou and M. Couve de Murville spoke, with histrionic sentimentality, of the "sacrifices" made by France in stabilising her economy in 1958 and 1963, in order to conform to the competitive character of the Common Market. France, it should be pointed out, made those sacrifices in her own interest, and in no one else's. Under the last two Conservative Governments, and the two Labour Governments since, Britain has failed to make any sacrifices whatever. But negotiations on terms of entry into the Common Market, even after an unequivocal application to join, must take a year to eighteen months and it has to be assumed that something will be done long before such negotiations are completed to put the British economy on its feet.

France can keep Britain out of the Common Market as long as the British Government refuses to make a firm and positive application to join. Why, then, does Mr. Wilson refuse to make it? Could it be that he realises that the declaration is an unalterable condition for membership, but that he actually does not want Britain to go in? France's leaders do not rule this out, and one of them hinted at this when he said that the British Government was "manoeuvring in order to pin the blame for Britain's exclusion on France." The implication was that Britain might be trying to disrupt the Market from without, as a preferable alternative to disrupting it after entry.

On the whole it is more likely that Mr. Wilson still believes that he can make prior conditions for a British application to join. He wants both to have his cake, and eat it. He may have been influenced to some extent by the fact that his Government, originally opposed to entry into the Common Market, modified its views only so far as to attach the prior conditions already listed. There is a curious inflexibility about Labour policies; once committed to a line of thought or action, Labour's leaders find it unpalatable to revise it. Notions of popularity and prestige become confused and interwoven with policy-making. A Labour Government, it seems, likes to fix its eyes on a distant objective and walk towards it in a straight line—whether it be the universality of the comprehensive school or the nationalisation of the steel industry. There is always the risk of taking some heavy tumbles between starting-point and objective, especially if you are not watching the ground under your feet.

If this is Mr. Wilson's problem, he alone can resolve it. Where popularity is concerned he must realise that the mood in Britain is increasingly in favour of entry into Europe. To depict France as Apollyon, barring the road to Christian on his pilgrim's progress, is only in some degree justified. Christian, after all, had to grapple Apollyon, in order to be able to continue on his way. Britain will have to grapple France, in more refined manner, in the negotiations which would follow an application to join the Common Market. At least, Mr. Wilson can be sure of one thing, following the Pompidou–Couve de Murville visit to London. The French Apollyon will not stand aside out of deference to him or out of a sympathy which France's leaders, with only France's interests at heart, do not feel for this country.

Terence Prittie

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

God, Theology and Love

The Problem of Sex at Vatican II — By PAUL BLANSHARD

AT LEAST FOUR major sexual policies of Roman Catholicism came up for some discussion at Vatican II: the clerical control of marriage, celibacy for priests and nuns, the prohibition of divorce, and the ban on contraceptives. Although there was no thorough debate in St. Peter's on any of these four policies, they were discussed vigorously in press conferences and in separate lecture halls and their consideration in behind-the-scenes arguments occupied a great deal of the time of the Fathers and their *periti* in the second, third, and fourth sessions.

In terms of practical change, the final outcome of the discussion was almost completely negative. In spite of great public furore over some sexual problems, the Church emerged at the end of the Council with substantially the same sexual code as before. A few verbal flourishes were added to Church doctrine acknowledging the potential importance of conjugal love in marriage, if properly controlled, and a few conditional hopes were engendered for future modification of the rule on contraception; but that was all.

Even the Church rule on mixed marriage, which was slightly changed by Pope Paul after the Council in his March document *Matrimonii Sacramentum,* remains almost as discriminatory as it was before. A Catholic is no longer excommunicated automatically if he is married by a Protestant clergyman; but no Catholic who has been married by anybody but a priest will be permitted to receive the sacraments; and every Catholic in a mixed marriage must still continue to pledge that all his children will be reared and educated as Catholics. The Protestant party in such a marriage will not always be required to make the same commitment in writing, but the moral commitment will still be required. A non-Catholic clergyman may be permitted to address some words of "congratulation and exhortation" to bride, groom, and guests at a mixed marriage, but he may not perform the ceremony himself. The present extreme form of discrimination against Jews in mixed marriage is continued as before.

In facing the sexual crisis in their own Church, the Fathers were labouring under a triple handicap. Their celibacy imposed strict limits on their capacity to judge sexual realities; Pope Paul revealed himself as an arch conservative in sexual matters; and the traditions of the Church imposed upon the Fathers almost insuperable obstacles to the swift modernisation of the supposedly divine anti-sexual dogmas of the past.

The Council's conservatism on sexual matters had its roots in the life experience of the twenty-six hundred odd bishops, abbots, and religious order heads who composed the assembly. One could almost feel the currents of apprehension in the air in the long rows of upholstered bleachers in St. Peter's when any proposal skirted the edge of sexual reform. These Fathers, all male, all celibate and, for the most part, quite old, had worn the hair-shirt of sexual denial all their lives. They had spent their careers in transmitting to the faithful the fundamentals of Catholic dogma on sex. They did not want their life agonies or their precious teaching to go unappreciated. For themselves they had come to regard sexual deprivation as a high virtue and they could not face the suggestion that the long weary years of self-denial had been unnecessary, perhaps a blunder imposed upon them by celibate superiors who were no wiser than they were.

The conservatism of Pope Paul on sexual issues was underscored almost as soon as he became pope, and his basic attitudes had been apparent even before that time when he was archbishop of Milan. He seized the opportunity of his first Christmas broadcast as pope in 1963 to attack birth control, and he climaxed his opposition to modern sexual trends at the United Nations on 4 October 1965 when he said: "You must strive to multiply bread so that it suffices for the tables of mankind, and not favour artificial control of birth, which would be irrational, in order to diminish the number of guests at the banquet of life." To students of the population explosion, Pope Paul's metaphor about "the banquet of life" seemed to be one of the most unfortunate *faux pas* of papal history.

The handicap of early anti-sexual Christian tradition was coupled at the Council with certain recently promulgated Church laws which were equally archaic in their application. The shadows of St. Paul and St. Augustine hung gloomily over the aula. If St. Paul was ever married, it must have been very unhappily. "He that is unmarried," he once said, "careth for the things that belong to the Lord; but he that is married careth for the things that are

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the world, how he may please his wife." St. Augustine went further. Laden with sex guilt after eleven years of concubinage, an illegitimate child, and an unsuccessful matrimony, he evolved the historic doctrine that in marriage the only entirely moral sexual intercourse is that which has for its object the procreation of children.

Vatican II did not go quite that far, but its Fathers were committed by their education to the habit of settling sexual issues by citations of tradition rather than by first-hand analysis of human life. For them canon law had become a yard-stick for measuring the marriage bed. Here, for example, is a key part of the decision of the Roman Rota in a 1958 case in which a Roman Catholic wife asked nullification of her marriage because her husband insisted that she wear a pessary during sexual intercourse. (The text is in Bouscaren's *Canon Law Digest,* Vol. V, p. 515.)

> By the contract of marriage there is not conferred a *ius in re* or right in the body, that is ownership of the body simply as such; but what is conferred is the right to the use of the body, and to a very determinate use, *i.e.,* for truly conjugal acts. Therefore, just as you cannot have a right to the use of a thing without the right to use that thing, so the right to the use of the body for conjugal acts cannot be transferred without the right to use the body for these same acts; and a condition which excludes those acts, or the use of the right to those acts, excludes consent and consequently the right to those acts. So one who contracts marriage with a condition excluding the use of the right to conjugal acts, transfers right to the use, without the right to use; that is, he transfers the right and excludes the right to one and the same thing, which is a contradiction. Since the right which is given and accepted in marriage is the right to use, and to a very determinate use, and consequently cannot be conceived without the right to use, the distinction between the *ius radicale* and the *ius utile sen expeditum* in regard to marriage, involves a contradiction.

(The lady in this case got her annulment.)

SEX FIRST intruded on the agenda at the second session during the discussion of a rather harmless subject—the revival in the Church of the once-important order of deacons. In early Christianity deacons had constituted a significant order in the Church, separate from the priesthood and just below it. More recently in Church development the rank of deacon had become in most parts of the world simply a stepping-stone for seminarians on their way to the priesthood, subject to the same rules of celibacy that applied to the priests. There is a desperate need for deacons particularly in South America where it has been impossible for many years to recruit a sufficient number of priests. Sex entered the picture when the question arose whether these deacons could be married. For a long time in the early Church they had been permitted to marry. Why not now when the need was so desperate?

Most of the Latin American bishops approved of the idea. Cardinal Spellman took the lead in saying No. Cardinal Ottaviani and the Holy Office—now the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith—and most of the other conservatives of the Curia went along with the concept of prohibition. Reasons galore were given, theological, financial, and practical; but the underlying reason was quite apparent. It was the fear of what sex might do to institutional practices. Could the Church put young priests without women side by side with deacons who had women and expect the priests to be happy in their chastity? In that event would not the house of celibacy come tumbling down?

Many bishops believed that any relaxation of celibate standards would lead to all-out disaster for celibacy. Perhaps they were right. It is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit young priests into a life of sexual abstinence and keep them in the priesthood. One American priest has recently estimated that there are 15,000 former priests in Italy, 5,000 in France, and 4,000 in the United States who have left the priesthood primarily for sexual reasons, but no one can verify such an estimate because statistics of priestly defections are kept secret.

In spite of desperate pleas by the South American bishops, Cardinal Spellman and his allies scored a partial victory in the third session by a vote of almost 3 to 1. The Constitution on the Church provides that "the diaconate can in the future be restored as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy" by national conferences with the approval of the Pope; older men may be married, but for young men "the law of celibacy must remain intact."

There was no general, all-out attack on celibacy for the Western Church in St. Peter's during the entire Council although the incorrigible Maximos IV Saigh of Antioch dared, in his rebellious French, to twit his fellow Fathers about their "bachelor psychosis" in facing the problem of birth control. At an English press conference in the second session three of England's leading clerics, Archbishop (now Cardinal) John Heenan, Abbot Christopher Butler of Downside, and Bishop Thomas Holland of Salford, were asked directly about the wisdom and the necessity of celibacy. Bishop Holland replied that the question of altering the fundamental Church rule on the subject would most certainly not even be discussed at the Council. Cardinal Heenan was asked why

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a secret poll of all the priests in the world could not be taken to see whether they actually favoured celibacy. He replied that such a poll would take too long. (An air mail poll covering more than 90 per cent of the world's priests could be taken in a single month.)

The Fathers were compelled to be rather discreet in their attacks on the idea of a married priesthood because of several special factors; celibacy is not a matter of divine law but of Church regulations (beginning in the fourth century and made official by the Second Lateran Council of 1129); and the Roman Catholic Church still has thousands of married priests among its Eastern-rite clergy who are permitted to marry before ordination, not afterwards. Most of them marry at the opportune moment, even though marriage keeps them from aspiring to the status of bishop.

In October 1965 the Council seemed to be about ready for a genuine debate on the wisdom of celibacy. Some of the progressives wanted such a debate and the press conferences were teeming with unanswered questions about the celibate policy. Cardinal Alfrink of Utrecht had remarked that "it must not be thought that the problem [of celibacy] is non-existent simply because no one has the courage . . . to express himself publicly on this point." It was at this moment, just a week after his triumphant plea for peace and freedom at the United Nations, that Pope Paul stepped in and stopped all public discussion of the question. His directive was more than an act of cloture; it was a flat veto of any movement for reform of celibacy. In a letter addressed to Cardinal Tisserant, ranking member of the Council's Presidency, Paul declared:

> It does not seem expedient that there should be a public discussion of a topic which calls for such delicacy of treatment and which is of such far-reaching importance for the Church . . . the existing discipline must be retained and strengthened, especially today . . . through it priests are able to consecrate all their love completely to Christ and to dedicate themselves exclusively and generously to service of the Church and to souls.

Paul seemed to rub salt into the wound by declaring blandly that his action was taken "without limiting the liberty of the Fathers in the least."

In St. Peter's the decision was greeted with a sigh of relief, then with two waves of applause. It was evident that *these* priests were not the priests in rebellion. Within a few hours Cardinal Tisserant was assuring the Pope in a letter: "For our part, Holy Father, we are always ready to accept your will and to obey your commandments." When the Council finally passed the Decree on Priestly Formation, it said: "Students who, according to the holy and fixed laws of their own rite, follow the revered tradition of priestly celibacy should be very carefully trained for this state. By it they renounce the companionship of marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven."

But Pope Paul's decision to suppress discussion of celibacy at the Council came too late to head off widespread debate on the issue by Catholic liberals in the United States. American priestly discontent with celibate demands has been boiling under the surface for a long time and young seminarians have been deserting their classrooms for marriage in great numbers. *Commonweal,* edited in New York by liberal Catholic laymen, came out flatly between the second and third sessions of the Council for "a certain portion of married priests," claiming that "there are many married laymen who would make excellent priests, but who do not feel called to celibacy. Since Christ did not demand celibacy of His Apostles, it ought to be possible for the Church to accept among its clergy married men." The new liberal Catholic weekly from Kansas City, the *National Catholic Reporter,* went much farther and opened its columns to a long series of frank, but anonymous, letters from unhappy priests, published under such headings as: "CELIBACY: LEGACY FROM ANOTHER WORLD"—"SHOULD THE COUNCIL LOOK AT CELIBACY?"—"PRIEST QUESTIONS LAW ON CELIBACY."

WHEN IT CAME to the discussion of the values of love in marriage, the Fathers moved forward a little from the philosophy of St. Augustine. Sexual pleasure was recognised as not always evil in itself; in fact it was recognised as a natural phenomenon which might contribute to human happiness. Cardinal Suenens was a leader in the Council's drift towards this new acceptance of personal sexual values, and he was assisted by Cardinal Leger of Quebec and many others. When the section on Fostering the Nobility of Marriage and the Family was finally adopted as part of the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, the Fathers conceded that although "the institution of matrimony itself and conjugal love are ordained for the procreation and education of children, and find in them their ultimate crown," still conjugal love "is uniquely expressed and perfected through the marital act. The actions within marriage by which the couple are united intimately and chastely are noble and worthy ones." Conjugal love has an independent value apart from procreation.

This was probably the greatest emotional and rhetorical advance in the Catholic philosophy of marriage since the days of early Christianity. The concession was not accompanied

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by any change in the elaborate rules of canon law which provide for detailed clerical control of matrimony and sexual conduct. These rules, which stretch for many weary chapters through the pages of theology textbooks, still apply very strict regulations to Catholic married couples and Catholic doctors, ranging from the details of marriage ceremonies to the length of time after a Catholic girl is raped when she may be permitted to remove the semen from her body without sin (the approved time is ten hours).

The new rhetorical attitude towards conjugal love in marriage did not extend to questions of divorce or annulment. "God Himself is the author of matrimony" insisted the Fathers in the Constitution on the Church, although they were forced to add that "the excellence of this institution is not everywhere reflected with equal brilliance." Cardinal Journet of Switzerland expressed the prevailing view on divorce in an eloquent Council speech in the last session when he quoted: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," and then added for himself: "The teaching of the Church on the indissolubility of marriage is the doctrine of Christ himself as revealed to us in the gospel.... The Church has no right to change what is of divine law." No one ventured to tell the cardinal that there is good authority for the claim that Jesus did not teach the indissolubility of all marriages, and that the Church itself permitted divorce for many centuries. Nor did anyone remind the cardinal that the Church still permits annulments of marriage for internal intellectual causes which would be considered too tenuous for acceptance by any civil divorce court in the world.

Cardinal Journet's speech was essentially a reply to a rather remarkable speech on the subject by an Eastern-rite archbishop from Egypt, Elie Zoghbi, a Patriarchal Vicar of the Melchites. Zoghbi's speech was the only utterance in the entire four sessions of the Council which could be construed as an appeal for the right of re-marriage after separation, and under great pressure he felt compelled the next day to say publicly that he was not favouring divorce. In fact, he did not use the word "divorce." His message, however, was quite clear. He asked for some kind of relief for certain Christians in distress, calling their problem "more agonising than that of birth control."

> It is the problem of the innocent spouse, who at the height of his powers and without any fault on his part, finds himself definitely alone through the fault of the other. The innocent party when he goes to his priest receives only one dogmatic answer: "I can do nothing for you."... He is directed to keep continent for the rest of his life. This rule presupposes a heroic virtue, a rare faith and an uncommon temperament. This is an impossible solution for most men.

Zoghbi's plea made the Fathers very uncomfortable, but the progressives were not strong enough in the Council to undertake a reform movement in this area. The final section on marriage "in The Church in the Modern World" denounced the "plague of divorce" in conventional terms and described the covenant of marriage as rooted in "irrevocable consent," without any attempt to face the realities of ill-adjusted marriage.

Zoghbi also opened up another great scandal in Catholic sexual policy: "annulment." Western priests, he charged, try

> through subtle casuistry, which occasionally performs acrobatics, to find all obstacles possible that can vitiate a marriage contract. After ten or twenty years, an impediment is discovered in the marriage hitherto unsuspected, which permits all to be dissolved as if by magic. The jurists find this natural and normal. We must realise, we pastors, that our faithful are occasionally stupefied and scandalised.

The faithful are often scandalised most by the enormous expense involved in going to the Roman Rota when a rich Catholic couple can spend the funds necessary to secure an annulment in a complicated case. The conviction is widespread that such annulments—called politely declarations of nullity which establish the fact that a marriage has never, never existed at all—are bought for cash. This charge, I believe, is untrue; but the hypocrisy involved in certain famous annulment cases in recent years has done as much to discredit Catholic sexual policy as any other feature of clerical power.

The shortcomings in Catholic annulment policy attracted much attention in Europe and in the United States when, during the first session of the Council, Princess Lee Radziwill, sister of Jacqueline Kennedy, received two judgments of nullity allowing her to consider herself safely married to her present husband, Prince Stanislaus Radziwill, a member of the minor Polish nobility. Princess Radziwill's lawyer, Fernando Della Rocca, declared in Rome: "It took four years, several hundred pages in Latin and many witnesses before the matter was concluded...."

In this case the theological pattern was confusing. Princess Radziwill had been previously married to a non-Catholic in a Catholic ceremony in Washington, D.C. To secure an annulment for both parties, it was necessary to wipe out three past marriages, two of Prince Radziwill's and one of Princess Radziwill, without ever admitting that the Church de-

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

parts from the doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage. The Prince's marriages were relatively easy to erase although he had been twice previously married and once previously divorced; his first marriage had already been declared null and his second marriage outside the Church was not recognised as valid. Princess Radziwill's former marriage was more difficult to erase because, although she had had one child by that marriage, she was compelled to resort to the thesis that her former husband had no intention of having children, and that this lack of intention nullified the whole affair. All difficulties were finally surmounted and the marriage annulled, with the explanation by the theologian of the leading diocesan journal in the United States that: "Consent is necessary for the validity of the marriage contract, as of any contract, and the consent must touch its essence, which is primarily the procreation of children. If the right to procreate children is excluded, there is no consent, hence no marriage. Even if children are actually born to such a union, it would be an invalid marriage, if the condition to exclude the right to procreation had been made as a condition of the marriage."

NOMINALLY the *status quo* on birth control was also maintained at the Council, but in this case the rebellion by lay Catholics throughout Europe and America had become so formidable that a large proportion of the bishops seemed to want to run for cover. They waited anxiously for some doctrinal cue from Pope Paul that would permit the use of the birth control pill under some revised theological formula. When the formula was not forthcoming and when Pope Paul seemed to close the door against compromise in his United Nations speech, they were bitterly disappointed.

The American bishops were caught in an especially awkward situation because, during the Council years, both the policy of the U.S. government and majority sentiment among American Catholics shifted sharply away from Catholic doctrine. The American bishops had lost control of the situation politically, and also within their own congregations. President Johnson, with the apparent approval of the great majority of American Catholics, had committed the United States to huge public expenditures for contraception both at home and abroad. This new departure constituted a complete reversal of U.S. federal policy since 1959 when President Eisenhower had declared that "as long as I am here the United States government will not use foreign-aid funds for birth control." In 1964, both former President Eisenhower and former President Truman agreed to serve as honorary chairmen of a world-wide planned parenthood organisation. The political defeat of Catholic policy on birth control seemed complete last year when Massachusetts, a predominantly Catholic state and the last state in the union to outlaw birth-control clinics, repealed its ancient anti-birth control law with the partial blessing of Cardinal Cushing.

At the Council two factors helped to undermine the theological position of the conservatives on birth control: the demand of several cardinals as well as ordinary bishops for a review of the Church's whole position, and the final admission by the most scholarly *periti* that there never has been any real biblical authority for Pius XI's prohibition of contraception. For centuries the theologians of the Church had cited the old story of Onan in Genesis 38, telling how God "slew" the unfortunate brother-in-law for spilling his seed on the ground instead of producing an heir for his deceased brother. At last, in Vatican II, this old yarn was demoted to its true level, that of a real-estate transaction under Levirate law hardly suitable as a moral foundation for sexual hygiene in the 20th century.[1]

On this issue, however, Pope Paul did everything possible to block Council reform. In June 1964 he took the decision on the subject away from the Council Fathers for "study" by a papal commission whose very composition was kept secret for many months. Although the study was supposedly impartial, Pope Paul adjusted the scales for the conservatives by announcing: "We say frankly that up to now we do not have sufficient motive to consider out of date and therefore not binding, the norms given by Pope Pius XII in this regard. Therefore they must be considered valid until we feel obliged in conscience to change them." When the birth control commission was reported to be drifting towards a compromise proposal, Pope Paul stiffened the resistance of the Church's old guard by sending two letters of remonstrance heavily weighted in favour of the traditional teaching.

Probably Paul's remonstrances have come too late. While the orthodox Church press throughout the world continues to repeat the old sexual

[1] The purpose of the Levirate law was to preserve land ownership by inheritance in the Jewish family, and God "slew" Onan not for *coitus interruptus* but for violating this Jewish inheritance code. Dr. John B. Noonan, now the foremost Catholic scholar in this field, has concluded in his comprehensive book *Contraception* that the facts "support the view that contraception is not the act for which Onan was killed," and that "there is no commandment against contraception in any of the Jewish codes of law."

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rules in this area, Catholic married couples are taking the issue out of celibate hands. If and when Pope Paul announces some minor "adjustments" in Church contraceptive doctrine, as he is expected to do shortly, they can have little effect one way or another. On this issue the realities of the population explosion and the desire of the Catholic people for personal freedom appear to have already won a battle for reform without benefit of clergy.

London Commentary

The Revolution that Wasn't

Labour in Power — By ALAN WATKINS

> *"And now for our cry," said Mr. Taper.*
> *"It is not a Cabinet for a good cry," said Mr. Tadpole, "but then, on the other hand, it is a Cabinet that will sow dissension in the opposite ranks, and prevent them having a good cry."*
> *"Ancient institutions and modern improvements, I suppose, Mr. Tadpole."*
> *"Ameliorations is the better word; ameliorations. Nobody knows exactly what it means."*
> B. DISRAELI, *Coningsby* (*1844*)

WHEN MR. HAROLD WILSON took office in October 1964 there were those who honestly expected the government of Britain to be conducted in a novel fashion. The gossip writers of the Sunday newspapers were beside themselves; even Mr. Peregrine Worsthorne confessed himself excited by the prospect of a new administration; more significantly, perhaps, the Left was full of hope. "There is no doubt," wrote Mr. Tom Nairn, a prominent member of the New Left,

> "that *relatively* [italics supplied], with regard to the past annals of the Labour leadership, Wilson represents a kind of progress. Wilson constantly professes the habitual Labour contempt for theory—'theology,' as he calls it—but has far more theoretical grasp than any previous leader. Unlike so many former Left-wing figures who have moved towards power, he has never actually renounced or broken with his past; he is likely to be much more open to Left-wing ideas and pressures than his predecessors. In contrast to Attlee and Gaitskell, Wilson seems singularly free from the bigoted anti-Communism which has been a surrogate for thought and action in many social-democratic movements.[1]

It is doubtful whether Mr. Nairn would choose to write in exactly the same way today. Indeed his prediction could hardly have been further falsified. Not only has Mr. Wilson disregarded the proferred advice of the Left; more, he has gone out of his way positively to offend the Left; and on every occasion he has triumphed. The pattern has been repeated in areas outside those of normal Left-wing concern. On the machinery of government, on the reform of Parliament, on the international monetary system—on all these, and on many more besides, the Wilson Administration has been distinguished not only by a hostility to the ideas of the Left but by a hostility to any ideas at all. The government, in short, has been conservative in a positive sense.

Why has this been so? Part of the reason lies in the personality and background of Mr. Wilson (of which more hereafter) and in the particular circumstances with which his Government was confronted. But this is not all. For Mr. Wilson's Government has behaved in what is, historically considered, a normal and unsurprising fashion. As R. H. Tawney (in *Equality*) observed as long ago as 1938, "the characteristic failing of Labour Governments is an exaggerated discretion." At different times this discretion has taken different forms. Mr. Wilson's brand of discretion is not the same as Lord Attlee's or Ramsay MacDonald's. We should also remember that parties and what they stand for change over the years; things called by the same names are not necessarily the same things; and there is no species of government called "Labour government." Yet though the government of say 1924 is different from the government of 1964 or 1966, it will be found on examination that they share certain characteristics, which are in turn shared by the government of 1945.

CHIEF AMONG these characteristics is the desire to be thought "fit to rule." Recalling the setting up of the first Labour Administration, Lord Attlee wrote that

> the position of a minority government is always difficult. There were those in our ranks who thought that we should have declined the re-

[1] T. Nairn, "The Nature of the Labour Party," in *Towards Socialism*. Collins, 1965.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> sponsibility. I am quite sure that they were wrong. *The electors at that time needed to see a Labour Government in being, if they were to appreciate that Labour was now the alternative to a Conservative administration.*[2] [Italics mine.]

In fact J. R. Clynes and Arthur Henderson had already served in war-time governments: but this was clearly not considered sufficient. Labour ministers were extremely conscious of having to prove themselves. In a sense it was fortunate that this was a minority government, as ministers could pursue policies of moderation to their hearts' content, and if they were questioned or criticised reply that (using the phrase of the time) Labour was "in office, but not in power."

The pressure to appear respectable was not so powerful in 1945, mainly owing to the fact that ministers such as Lord Attlee and Bevin and Morrison had served with great distinction in the war-time coalition. But though the pressure was not so strong, the result was the same: members of the government still behaved as if they had to prove themselves.

Even more did the members of the Wilson Government behave in this way. To some extent they had a reason for doing so. Of the politicians who took their places round the table at Number Ten after the 1964 victory, only three —Mr. James Griffiths, Mr. Patrick Gordon Walker and Mr. Wilson himself—had previously been real ministers in a real cabinet. Before the 1964 election the Conservatives had made much of the inexperience of potential Labour ministers. Though this criticism—"they haven't got the chaps," as Mr. Wilson was scornfully to phrase it at the 1965 Labour conference—gained great currency in the saloon bars of the City of London, there was in fact remarkably little to it. It was obvious even before the election that politicians such as Mr. Richard Crossman, Mr. Anthony Crosland, Mr. Roy Jenkins, Mrs. Barbara Castle and Mr. Ray Gunter would be quite as competent as their Conservative equivalents, if not more so. Nevertheless, though Labour ministers have a properly high opinion of their abilities, they are also at pains to prove that they are fit to exercise office.

PERHAPS THEY ARE RIGHT to do so, whatever the penalties in terms of unimaginative policies. Certainly there exists—it existed even more markedly in the past—a prejudice against Labour ministers. This prejudice derives less from these ministers' alleged lack of experience than from the fact that they are Labour. They are, it is popularly supposed, "just the same as us"; they are "not used to handling money"; they "haven't been brought up to it like the Tories have." Anyone who has spent much time canvassing on the doorstep will, I believe, bear out the truth of this.

CONNECTED with the desire to be thought fit to rule, though distinct from it, is a generally establishmentarian attitude towards the machinery of government. In "the machinery of government" I include not only the civil service but also the nationalised industries, the royal family, and the honours system. Of these, however, the civil service remains probably the most important. Certainly the Labour Party was for a long time aware of its importance. Harold Laski devoted a considerable part of his pre-war writings to the necessity for getting rid of the class enemy in Whitehall. And in a little-remembered resolution the party conference of 1946 requested the Government to

> ensure that the execution of the Socialist foreign policy is not entrusted to those whose whole background and tradition have rendered them incapable of understanding the first principles of such a policy.

The conference also asked the government to

> make the fullest use of its powers of retirement on generous terms, without stigma, of public servants whose capacity for useful service is exhausted and their replacement by persons in accord with the progressive attitude of the British public as shown in their decision at the last general election.

Writing as recently as 1963, Mr. Crossman concurred, though he did not go so far as to want to cast Foreign Office or Treasury knights out on to the cold pavements of Great George Street and Storey's Gate. In his valuable essay "The Lessons of 1945"[3] he ranked the retention of establishmentarian personnel in the civil service and nationalised industries as one of the Attlee Government's major errors. (The others, according to Mr. Crossman, were the 1945 Government's failure to do its homework in the years before office and the breakdown in its relations with the ordinary members of the Labour movement.) Of course it is fairly clear that there was no real obstruction of the Government's policies by the civil service. Lord Attlee has on several occasions paid tribute to the civil servants' helpfulness and lack of political bias. Even the most obviously civil service-approved policies were also approved by ministers. Ernest Bevin's Palestinian policy, for instance, which was widely thought of as an emanation and embodiment of the Foreign Office, was also entirely characteristic of Bevin.

[2] C. R. Attlee, *As It Happened*. Heinemann, 1954.
[3] R. H. S. Crossman, *Planning for Freedom*. Hamish Hamilton, 1965.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And yet, though we may agree that Laski was wrong and that Lord Attlee's tributes are in their way justified, is there still not something, just a little, perhaps, in Mr. Crossman's criticisms? And do they not apply as strongly to the government of which Mr. Crossman is a member as to the government of 1945? For no one seriously suggests that civil servants positively refuse to carry out government policy. What happens is more subtle than this. There are certain difficulties, the minister may be told . . . no doubt he will be aware of them . . . perhaps a more detailed study might be made . . . and so on.

THE MOST EXTREME EXAMPLE is provided by the case of Mr. James Callaghan and the Treasury knights. Whether Mr. Callaghan has a view of his own on economic policy is something of a mystery (and I do not say this in any sneering spirit). It is therefore difficult to assess precisely what effect his senior civil servants have had upon him. But, what is more important, there can be very little dispute about the effect the Treasury has had upon the present Government as a whole. The Treasury knights have controlled the Government's policies in general and those of the Department of Economic Affairs in particular. And, looking back, this hegemony could have been avoided in only one way—by taking over the existing Treasury buildings and personnel, and renaming them the Department of Economic Affairs. The Inland Revenue Department could then have been renamed the Treasury, and put under the command of an industrious but inoffensive minister such as Mr. Douglas Houghton. This kind of arrangement was in fact suggested by Aneurin Bevan about fifteen years ago.

In considering all this we should remember that Mr. Wilson is a politician with a profound reverence for the orders and mysteries of the civil service. He would be most upset if he ever thought he had caused serious offence to a permanent secretary. (Officials of the Bank of England he treats rather differently. One of the Prime Minister's favourite party pieces concerns the strong words he uttered to Lord Cromer, the Governor of the Bank, at the time of the first sterling crisis.)

Nor is Mr. Wilson's high regard for permanent civil servants merely the result of his war-time experiences as one of them. He is by nature cautious, industrious and—there is no escaping it—somewhat limited. That he is also possessed of enormous political skill and élan is for present purposes neither here nor there. Mr. Wilson, unlike, say, Bevan, does not have a general kind of mind. He is not happy with abstractions. By "abstraction" I do not necessarily mean those big political phrases like liberty or equality or democracy or the liberal tradition—though as it happens Mr. Wilson is not particularly at ease with these either. He likes talking about specific cases: this or that scheme, this particular by-election, how he is going to keep the boys happy on such-and-such an issue, what he is going to say to the House the day after tomorrow. His is, in short, not so much an empirical as a pragmatic mind. He echoes John Dewey and asks: does it work? Most civil servants, at any rate the successful ones, think in the same kind of way. It is a method of thought which is productive in solving certain kinds of second-order problems: but no one has yet suggested that it is likely speedily to bring about the new Jerusalem.

THE POWER of the civil service, which is in any case great, is still further increased by the tendency evinced by all Labour governments to come to power with vague or semi-completed plans. Conservative or coalition governments arrive in office with no plans at all. They do not really need any; they can make things up as they go along. But if a Labour Government has an item in its programme committing it (for example) to the nationalisation of steel, matters become difficult when it is realised that no one has the faintest idea of how to set about that nationalisation. Lord Attlee, in a conversation with Lord Francis-Williams, summarised the 1945 experience by saying:

> There wasn't much trouble with the mines. Transport was much more difficult, and iron and steel had not been worked out by the time we came in.[4]

Indeed it had not. Following a conflict among senior ministers as to whether steel nationalisation should be introduced, Mr. George Strauss put to the Cabinet a thousand-word sketch outlining his plans. Nor was steel the only subject for nationalisation on which little or no detailed work had been done. Lord Attlee may have believed that the mines gave no trouble, but this was certainly not the impression of the minister actually in charge, Mr. Emanuel Shinwell. Mr. Shinwell went to the Ministry of Fuel and Power (as it then was) confidently expecting to find that someone, somewhere, had prepared a plan for the taking over of the coal industry. Alas, the pigeon-hole was bare. Some weeks later he confessed at a luncheon at the Dorchester Hotel:

> We are about to take over the mining industry. That is not as easy as it looks. I have

[4] Francis Williams, *A Prime Minister Remembers*. Heinemann, 1961.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been talking of nationalisation for forty years, but the complications of the transfer of property had never occurred to me.

In the months before the 1964 election it seemed that the lesson had been learnt. At any rate there was talk enough of "working-parties" (occasionally varied to "brains trusts") of businessmen and academics who were devoting part of their energies to creating "blueprints." It can now be seen that most of this talk was window-dressing. There may well have been little gatherings of academics and businessmen at the Bonnington Hotel and elsewhere: but little came of their deliberations. In all those fields in which one might reasonably have expected preparatory work to produce results—such as education, steel re-nationalisation, the Ombudsman, and the land commission—the minister concerned had to start virtually from scratch. And as one might have thought, preliminary work in more rapidly changing areas—such as foreign and financial policy—was even more slender and even less profitable.

IT IS POSSIBLE to see successive Labour governments' lack of interest in ideas as a consequence of inadequate pre-office preparation of questions of detail. Most of the time of ministers has to be spent in actually running things. They do not have the leisure or the inclination to look very far ahead. It is enough—it is more than enough, it is the millennium itself—for Labour actually to be in office. To the maintenance of this happy state all else must be sacrificed. "What, you don't want the other lot in, do you?" is, in all but the most idiosyncratic Left-wing groups, the final, knock-down argument.

Looking back, one can discern a pattern. In opposition there are provocative speeches and, more rarely, provocative ideas. In government the ideas dry up. Thus it was with the first two Labour Governments: ideas on how to deal with unemployment had to come from such figures as Oswald Mosley and Leo Amery. Thus it was also with the 1945 Government. Several versions have been published of the collapse of this Government's morale. Most versions agree that one, perhaps the major, reason was that ideas had dried up. Some memorialists, indeed, put the date as early in the Government's life as 1947, that *annus horrendus* as Dalton was to describe it.

Granted that the generation of ideas did in fact cease, Lord Attlee and his ministers have possibly been too easily criticised for the failure. After all, what were they to do? They had fulfilled most of their programme. Industries had been nationalised, a free health service set up; and there had been no unemployment. Of course there were other things to do . . . this was only the first stage on the road towards socialism.

> Socialism [said *Tribune* of 2 January 1948] does not merely mean an endless flow of nationalisation measures through the House of Commons. There will be plenty of these in the next few years, but by themselves they do not constitute Socialism or anything like it.

And yet, what precisely was to be done? *Tribune* was not of very much practical assistance; nor was there any help forthcoming from the Right wing of the Party. One cannot really blame *Tribune* or the Right or even the members of Lord Attlee's Government for this failure to produce fresh ideas. The reason for the failure was perhaps best expressed, even though unwittingly, by the *Tribune* leading article quoted above.

> Exactly one hundred years ago—in the famous year 1848—the Chartists fought their last desperate battle against the same enemies we face today. It is one of the glories—and one of the tragedies—of British history that all, or almost all, the aims they inscribed upon their banners are now accomplished and accepted. The political democracy for which the Chartists battled has been won. They were right; and all their enemies, Tory and Liberal, aristocrat and bourgeois, economist and philosopher, have been proved wrong.

Precisely. But what in that case remained to be done? In the late 'forties it needed very sharp ears to pick up any clear answer from the British Labour Party.

THE PERIOD 1945–51, then, was an unproductive one for Labour in terms of ideas. The seeds both of Bevanism and of revisionism were sown at this time. Both movements grew out of disillusion; both sides agreed that something had gone wrong. The revisionists produced the more convincing answers—partly because the Bevanite forces were divided, partly because the Bevanites were more interested in foreign than in home affairs, partly because such recommendations as they did make on home affairs were vague ones. Most of the Labour Party's ideas were produced in opposition and particularly in the later 'fifties.

The revisionists and the Bevanites were not alone. The post-Suez period saw the emergence of that young, Marxist, non-Communist university generation that called itself "the New Left." This period also saw the emergence of the New Left's intellectual (though not political) mentors, Mr. Richard Hoggart and Mr. Raymond Williams. The work of the revisionists and the New Left alike was rendered less influential than it would otherwise have

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been by the election of Mr. Wilson to the party leadership. Mr. Wilson's hostility to general notions has already been remarked upon. This hostility was inevitably further increased by office as Prime Minister.

THE REVISIONISTS and the New Left had agreed—though they had arrived at their agreement by different routes—that one of the major obstacles to socialism in Britain was the class system. Oddly, the Bevanites as a group had never been particularly exercised by class; nor were they enthusiastic about financial as distinct from social egalitarianism. The desire for inequality, wrote Aneurin Bevan in his *In Place of Fear,* was rooted in human nature. Certainly the government of which he had been a member had shown little interest in egalitarian questions (excluding, that is, such redistribution as was carried out through the social services). As Mr. Anthony Howard put it in his contribution to *Age of Austerity 1945–51*:

> The whole complex pattern of social behaviour —or, to be frank about it, class distinction—is an inappropriate one for legislation. But the doubt remains that in its first year—and certainly in its most fruitful one—Labour was fighting the symbolic battles and not the real ones. Its slogan in the election had been "Let Us Face the Future"; its practice in Parliament was to correct the outstanding arrears of the past. And for that—since there is a continuity in all things (and especially in the shape and mould of a society)—it eventually paid the price.

In the 'forties, as we have noted, there existed a distinct lack of theory in the Labour movement. This lack was remedied in the 'fifties. The notion of social equality played a major part not only in the writings of the revisionists and the New Left but also in the series of policy statements issued between the elections of 1955 and 1959. Why is it, in that case, that egalitarianism plays such a minor, indeed virtually non-existent part in the practice of the current Labour Government?

Part of the explanation may no doubt be found in some of those tendencies, common to all Labour governments, which have been outlined above—such as a desire to be thought respectable and a support for an establishmentarian civil service.

A MORE IMPORTANT PART of the explanation lies in the nature of Mr. Wilson's leadership. For not only does he have hostility towards general ideas, whether concerning social equality or anything else. He also has a positive distaste for egalitarian notions. This distaste is consistent with his neo-Bevanite past. It is also consistent with the entirely natural pride which he takes in his own personal achievement. When he said that the grammar schools would be abolished over his dead body, he meant it. He really does believe that brains and industry—particularly perhaps industry—should be duly rewarded, just as they were rewarded in his own case. But this is not all. Mr. Wilson did not play down egalitarian ideas in the 1963–64 period simply because this corresponded to his own beliefs. In those pre-election months he was asked by a friend what it was that he was trying to do. "I am," replied Mr. Wilson, "making myself acceptable to the suburbs." Never having been rich himself, said Mr. Wilson on another occasion, he did not have guilty feelings about riches, as some other Labour leaders had perhaps had. Quite deliberately, Mr. Wilson put a great deal of emphasis on "opportunity."

But there is a third and possibly more important reason for the retreat from equality as an object of Labour governments. This is the conviction, which is largely a product of this decade, that equality is not enough. As Mr. David Marquand has recently observed, the revisionist literature of the 'fifties assumed that, given a combination of Keynesianism with the odd physical control here and there, the economy would pretty well run itself, accelerating towards growing prosperity; and the experience of Conservative governments of the 'fifties seemed to bear this out. Mr. Crosland's *The Future of Socialism,* which was first published in 1956, was informed by the general conviction that socialists would do well to concentrate more on sociology and less on economics. One of the chapters in this book was headed "How much do economics matter?" and broadly speaking the answer was "Not as much as we have supposed." The assumption was that given a high rate of growth (which it was also assumed was fairly easily attainable) all that remained for socialists to do was to distribute the ensuing riches in a more humane, enlightened and equitable fashion than, say, the Americans were doing.

This approach, which was by no means confined to the revisionists, contained two misjudgments. The first was to assume that in Britain a high growth-rate could be brought about without too much internal disarrangement. The second misjudgment was to disregard Britain's position as the proprietor of an international reserve currency, sterling.

SUCCESSIVE Labour governments' attitudes towards sterling constitute not only their major but their determinant—one might say their defining—characteristic. This attitude

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

can only be described as one of profound reverence. Collectively, Labour governments (and the present one is no exception) are willing to sacrifice anything—life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness—to the maintenance of sterling, its position, its parity and its prestige. No burdens are too great to bear, no price too high to pay. Stand up, stand up, for sterling! Individual members of individual governments may from time to time have their doubts, which are communicated in furtive fashion over the luncheon table: but in public the doubts disappear and the unity is positively Stalinesque.

What is the explanation of this impressive and unbroken alignment behind Mr. Leslie O'Brien and Lord Cromer and their predecessors at the Bank of England? Is it because Labour governments have no choice in the matter; that, simply because they are Labour governments, they must demonstrate an extra and ostentatious loyalty—rather as former Communists make the most virulent anti-Communists, or Roman Catholic converts the most devout members of their new faith? One view current on the Left is that Labour governments have no alternative, poor things; sterling is part of international capitalism; it is part of the system.

> The ultimate sanction of economic power faced with a hostile government is flight of capital [writes Mr. Perry Anderson]. In England, the historic organisation of the sterling area has made this a permanent possibility rather than an emergency temptation, since the pound is so vulnerable to international speculation. . . . It is no accident that both major Labour governments have fallen after a run on the pound.

It is no longer necessary to demonstrate in detail the harm done to Britain, and particularly Britain under a Labour Government, by the present position of sterling as an international currency. However, one non-technical point may be made in passing. Britain's sterling liabilities obscure her true economic performance. On the whole they make that performance appear worse than it really is. Over the years the result must be a sapping of national self-confidence.

But to return to our earlier question: why is it that all Labour governments show a pronounced disinclination to argue with the international monetary system? After all, the system is not sovereign. And it can be changed, even though with difficulty. Neither are those who participate in it members of a conspiracy to crush British Labour governments. The people who handle the sterling balances of private or institutional holders are by and large conservative in their inclinations, believers in sound finance (though what is "sound finance" at any given time varies according to fashion). They therefore tend to be opposed to Labour governments. There is no mystery about this, no conspiracy. It is what one would expect. The solution is not to bemoan the existence of international capitalism, still less to prostrate Britain at the bankers' feet, but rather to get rid of the obligation to maintain sterling as an international currency. There is plenty of scope for negotiation on this theme with the U.S. Government and the International Monetary Fund.

One reason why such negotiations are not undertaken is that many Labour politicians, notably on the left of the party, have a certain affection for sterling not so much in its technical, financial sense as in its symbolic capacity. Mr. Wilson embodies this affection as well as anyone does.

In the end the argument appears circular. Labour governments take such-and-such an action (for example, to support sterling come what may) because they are conservative; at the same time, such-and-such an action can be taken as evidence of the conservatism of Labour governments. But the argument, though circular, is not viciously so. We can break the circle by explaining the conservatism. Mr. Nairn, for instance, equates conservatism in this sense with utilitarianism and its successor, the Fabian tradition, which (in contradistinction to the Morris-ite tradition) has been imposed on the Labour Party as its dominant ideology. As he expresses it, the Labour Party has always had a peculiarly weak Left wing. This is an attractive argument, though it does not satisfactorily explain why Leftists of undoubted previous doctrinal purity are so completely transmogrified by office.

There is another explanation, resting on quirks of the British character and parliamentary system. As A. J. Balfour put it in 1928:

> Our alternating Cabinets, though belonging to different Parties, have never differed about the foundations of society. And it is evident that our whole political machinery presupposes a people so fundamentally at one that they can safely afford to bicker; and so sure of their own moderation that they are not dangerously disturbed by the never-ending din of political conflict. May it always be so.[5]

And Mr. Wilson, we may assume, would say a quiet *"hear, hear"* to that.

[5] Lord Balfour, Introduction to W. Bagehot, *The English Constitution* (World Classics ed., 1928).

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Spectator

The Spectator is an independent journal of pronounced and radical views. Each week it speaks with a clear and informed voice on politics, economics, literature and the arts.

The Spectator delights free minds: it stimulates intelligent controversy on all the great issues of the day.

Spectator contributors during 1966 include:

Politics

Alan Watkins . . . Nigel Lawson . . . Iain Macleod . . . Jo Grimond . . . Enoch Powell . . . Norman St. John Stevas . . . Angus Maude . . . Desmond Donnelly . . . Sir Edward Boyle . . . Mark Bonham-Carter . . . Shirley Williams . . . Lord Radcliffe.

Overseas Affairs

Murray Kempton . . . Lord Gladwyn . . . Sir Edgar Whitehead . . . Jean Lecanuet . . . Tibor Szamuely . . . David Watt . . . Alec Nove.

The Economy

Nicholas Davenport . . . Reginald Maudling . . . Charles Clore . . . Leopold de Rothschild . . . Oliver Stutchbury.

Literature and the Arts

Anthony Burgess . . . Simon Raven . . . Stuart Hood . . . M. L. Rosenthal . . . Hilary Spurling . . . J. H. Plumb . . . Charles Reid . . . Peter Quennell . . . A. Alvarez . . . Bryan Robertson . . . D. W. Brogan . . . Graham Greene.

Life and Leisure

Randolph Churchill . . . Ludovic Kennedy . . . Quintin Hogg . . . Lord Egremont . . . John Rowan Wilson . . . John Wells . . . Bryan Wilson . . . "Strix" . . . David Frost . . . Auberon Waugh . . . Giles Playfair.

Please send me a year's subscription to the Spectator. U.K. £3 15s. 0d., U.S. $12

Name_____

Address_____

To: The Spectator, 99 Gower Street, London, W.C.1

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Obsession with Amorphous Mankind

Marguerite Young's Strange Best-Seller — By A. S. Byatt

Queequeg's tattoo marks in *Moby Dick* are described as "a complete theory of the heavens and the earth, a mystical treatise on the art of attaining truth." The savage is "a wondrous work in one volume; but whose mysteries not even himself could read, though his own live heart beat against them." The passage has been often quoted as a description of the inclusive mythical aspirations of *Moby Dick*. *Miss MacIntosh, my Darling*[1] could be described in the same terms. But between *Moby Dick* and the very varied twentieth-century symbolist novels which have loosely been described as myths an important shift in subject-matter has taken place, of which *Miss MacIntosh* is an extreme and fascinating example. *Moby Dick* is a novel about whales and the nature of good and evil. *Miss MacIntosh* is, like *Moby Dick*, a novel about the nature of reality. But it is, more importantly, a myth about the nature of myth and the nature of the image-forming consciousness.

In many of the great symbolist novels the process of image-forming, the making of meaning, is observed by the consciousness of a character, usually an artist, *within* the novel, who is not contained by his "myth" but curious intellectually about the adequacy or inadequacy of the symbols he forms to deal with the life he lives (Proust, Stephen Dedalus, Tonio Kröger). It is also possible to attempt to create single-handed a "mythical" story which depends for its impact on the kind of aesthetic *half-belief* we afford to the symbols offered to us by the researches of psycho-analysts, anthropologists, and literary critics. This myth depends on a nostalgia for an idea of a primitive, pre-logical consciousness, a "blood-thought," a symbolic awareness which is "deeper and earlier" than logic.

Marguerite Young is ostensibly more self-conscious aesthetically than most totemistic myth-novelists; but her characters are not, and so the novel is a kind of hybrid. "What is man," she asks, "but a series of competing mythologies, most fearful and wonderful?" Her vast novel, eighteen years in the making, is an attempt at a synthesis. It creates in the reader an initial uncertainty about the nature of the response required. It is very literary; there is a slightly dated atmosphere of the aesthetic excitement which lay behind our discovery of metaphysical wit as a way of reading the world as one divine metaphor, of the aesthetic epiphanies of symbolist poetry, of the intellectual knitting together of our fragmented faiths in *The Waste Land*. But cumulatively it appears to require a more whole-hearted assent to its mysteries than those forms did.

The minimal plot concerns the bus journey of the narrator, Vera Cartwheel, from the eastern seaboard of the States to a remote Middle Western village in search of a metaphysical reality personified by her vanished nursemaid (presumed drowned) Miss MacIntosh—"no one but a fusty, busty old nursemaid, very simple-minded, very simple, the salt of common sense." The pilgrimage is literary. Vera's mother passes her life in a horizontal opium dream in an old mansion in the New England of the transcendentalists, the allegorists, Melville, Hawthorne—a "realm of shades" "stolen from the past," characterised by images of dark and light, sea and shore, shifting tides, death by drowning, the "primitive New England coast where all the ghosts of the world wandered, shrieking like winds, like tides, like daft sea-birds. . . ." Miss MacIntosh, born in What Cheer, Iowa, sees the Middle West, by contrast, as

> that life which required no medium of the evil imagination to stand between oneself and the clear reality of simple things, for reality was very good and could be found by those who lived, could be seen even with the naked eye. Common sense is the finest sense, she had always said. . . .

[1] *Miss MacIntosh, my Darling*. By Marguerite Young. Peter Owen Ltd., 63s.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The characters in the mid-West, however, although their consciousness is earthier, play out or brood upon very *literary* versions of the blood-myths which feed novels about isolated country communities. Play is made with Hamlet and Oedipus, incest and rape, mandrakes, illegitimate birth and idiocy. The stuff of literary realism turns out to be at least as hallucinatory as the stuff of literary idealism. Miss MacIntosh represents "the merely understandable, comprehensible world, which was certainly beyond my mother's comprehension, being the central mystery." But since, Miss Young tells us, "accuracy is impossible in this mistaken world—because there is always a discrepancy between an event and our consciousness of it" Miss MacIntosh's average "common sense" turns out to be the most hallucinatory and incomprehensible factor of all.

BOTH THE FIGURES in the story and the structure of the prose are symbolically designed to explore this hallucinatory aspect of consciousness. The New England figures are all obsessed by some form of non-existent existence. The opium lady entertains a drug bottle called Mr. Res Tacamah, a chandelier, kings, princes and headhunters in an eternal dream. She "suffered from claustrophobia" at the thought of "the moon the sun the stars, the pathless places, places where her feet could not take her. The mere idea of certainty would have caused, indeed often had caused, a panic in her mind." She "pretended that the real was the dream, that the dream was the real" because

> for others, as for herself, the dream must suffice, for reality bears with it always an aspect of fateful disappointment, of falling short, just through its being unreal, just through being unrealised, through its omissions of other realisations which had also trembled at the threshold of the jewel-framed door or were that contingent world one might have experienced by taking the other train through the other landscape. . . .

Her bedside companion and putative lover, Mr. Spitzer, is obsessed by, and believes himself occasionally to be, his dead brother. One brother represents the elements of chance in the universe —he is a gambler, a suicide, characterised by images of horses, dice, billiards, etc. The other brother is orderly (but forgetful), a lawyer, a harmonist, who spends his time contemplating his own unwritten music. Mr. Spitzer's dreams too are more real than "reality." He is a paradox—"this living ghost whose terrible flesh belied, he believed, his late death or his brother's early death," and

> his dead brother's thoughts which moved and stirred in his cold dead imperceptive mind, were surely as beautiful as figments of the absolute, beautiful as the fictitious and multiform persons who, like the splendours of my mother's toxic dreams were like the quality of her essential evasiveness, her inability or unwillingness to look directly at the anonymous face of life. . . .

Cousin Hannah, an elderly Boston suffragette, whose death-bed is exhaustively described, suffers from the unreality of the windmills at which she has tilted, her consciousness of the chivalrous knight she was not, the eternal woman she neither loved nor became.

The characters in the mid-West are equally concerned with the unreality of the events they live through, the superior reality of what they desire or imagine. The football-playing youth on the bus and his pregnant wife are both obsessed by the idea of a dying girl who was cheer-leader for his team and his first love. An old Doc spends his time delivering imaginary babies with rusty instruments from holes in the earth. The hangman imagines the possible unborn acts and children of the man he has eased out of life shrieking like mandrakes round the scaffold. The book culminates with a phantasmagoric evocation of a schizophrenic woman forever in a state of phantom pregnancy and successive imaginary still-births, described in inexhaustible detail, watched over a churchyard wall by a mule, uselessly in heat.

Each character's consciousness is constructed at vast length in flowing spates of *leit-motivs*, threads of symbols which are broken, overlap and reform, in other patterns, to suggest other characters. Page-long sentences are constructed as questions requiring the answer *No*. Underlying the whole is an insistent play on the theological and literary reconciliation of polarities; hermetic and neo-platonic images of the male and female principles in the universe proliferate. Death and marriage and birth are imaged in terms of each other so that all characters and all consciousness are finally shown to be the same. "For every being, Mr. Spitzer had observed, must contain its opposite as the heavens contained both moon and sun or as Mr. Spitzer contained his brother in the sunlight." He has learned that "all dreamers dreamed the same dreams, even when separated, even when they never met, that there was perhaps only one great dream informing all dreamers and all dreams, one great dreamer dreaming through us." Vera comes to the final conclusion that "whatever one had found was real was real, everyone I had ever known had said or in one way or another had proved, and even the unreal things were real. . . ." The search for lost Miss MacIntosh is prefaced by the statement

> All my life I had been reaching for the tangible and it had evaded me, much like the myth of

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> Tantalus, much as if the tangible itself were an illusion. . . .
>
> Every heart is the other heart. Every soul is the other soul. Every face is the other face. The individual is the one illusion.

THE CENTRAL SCENE in the book is the scene in which Vera has a night-long wrestling match or love bout with the Angel of reality, Miss MacIntosh, and discovers that her love is bald. She has, moreover, an amputated breast, no eyebrows, no eyelashes and no ovaries. She is "the anonymous face of life" and an image of sterility and deprivation. Vera's lover is

> neither man nor woman but some angelic demon, the flesh and blood with features missing with senses missing and yet with more than sense provided. It was almost nothing and it was more than the whole world beside. . . . The lover who had just emerged was surely no man, but only such a man as is hidden in the woman, just as there must also be, in every man, a woman secret and recessive, the forever fading image of the other self, the lost one. . . .

Accuracy, common sense, the tangible, turn out to be the last illusion covering a sense of desolation and deprivation. Vera says before the encounter that she felt

> life should answer the quest of the heart. . . . I was free, having no sense then of the imploring past, no sense of the power of the barren, the power of helpless and impotent things, nor the presentiment that what does not exist exists if we believe in it. . . .

But her discovery of Miss MacIntosh's baldness is the discovery of a world created by a *deus absconditus* in which the object of desire is forever absent and forever to be imagined. "For few, looking back on their lives will simply admit that there was no image of their loves," Vera says. Mr. Spitzer feels "the only loves were the loves he had never loved, those loves which, like my mother's vision, should exceed the human circumstance." Pieces of paradoxical quasi-theology recur.

> Nature was dead cold and dark. For weddings are funerals and funerals are weddings. When one marries a part of one must die. When one dies, one is forever married, married through separation unto eternity. The great lover is always the absent one. He is one whom no one has ever known or loved.

So Miss MacIntosh's "essential beauty," like Cousin Hannah's, turns out to be that of "deprivation," of absence of being. Life turns out to be "imagination even to the last tenth."

In so far as *Miss MacIntosh* is a coherent and moving novel it depends on the cumulative intensity of these images of love and reality being created out of deprivation. Miss MacIntosh's

NICOLAS HAINES
Freedom and Community

A growing army of social servants does today the work once done by priests and politicians. Do these millions, organized for professional reasons, know what kind of society they propose to create? This is the problem which the book discusses—do we, through emphasis on community, lose the habits of free men? This is not a book for professional philosophers; it is addressed instead to educated people. Nor does it argue the point; it provides for it. 42s

HAROLD C. HINTON
Communist China in World Politics

Professor Hinton traces the influence of Communist China's foreign policy area by area and country by country, and studies China's significant attempt to develop relationships with Western Europe. Here are the historical, political and ideological foundations of Communist China's foreign policy, China's attempts to influence the balance of power in Asia, and reflections on the international challenges Communist China is likely to present.
Endpaper maps 42s

New Poetry:
PHILIP HOBSBAUM
In Retreat
18s

KEITH HARRISON
Points in a Journey
18s

MACMILLAN

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

naked and vulnerable skull is related to dead, cold nature, to the cold and pitted surface of the dead and female moon, to the rolling stone, to the original egg, laid, according to Hesiod, by Eros in the lap of Chaos. In the last section of the book the woman with the phantom pregnancy is struggling to produce "the bald dome dreaming waters and clouds and winds, hair, feathers of birds, grass, flowers, all women's loves." Hair, feathers, grass, clouds and Miss MacIntosh's macintosh and wig, are seen as the clothing of illusion on "the naked egg of reality in the long whispering grass of a dream."

> Reality was that which was unreal and was clothed with the dream of reality, dream with dream, body of this chameleon dream, the skies and the trees and the hills and the stones of this phantasmagoric world which was nine-tenths imagination and clouds.

THE ENGLISH REVIEWS I have seen have tended to dismiss this book with uneasy jokes about the Great American Novel and the adjective "self-indulgent." It is arguable that a little verbal self-indulgence and adventurousness with the richer possibilities of the language is not a bad thing. And *Miss MacIntosh* is neither amorphous nor incoherent—there are all sorts of interweavings of meanings I am aware would be there to sort out if I ever had the energy to embark on a second reading. There are no doubt future graduate students who will. *Miss MacIntosh* as a "complete theory of the heavens and the earth" seems not so much too self-indulgent to succeed but too *simple* (and possibly too private) to be as completely effective as it might. We have still to explain the phenomenon of the immense success in the United States of a book which seems, in any normal sense, virtually unreadable at first sight.

It seems to me that the success, and the ultimate failure, of the novel spring from the same thing: its obsession with what seems a general contemporary obsession—the hallucinating effects of sensory deprivation (or dislocation at least). Marguerite Young's other prose work, *Angel in the Forest*, published in 1945, is a study of two contrasting efforts at Utopian living in New Harmony, Indiana. One, the Rappite celibate community, was based on a theological assumption very like the metaphysic behind *Miss MacIntosh*. These Rappites, she tells us

> converted consciously or unconsciously, hallucination into fact and fact into hallucination wherever they could. Their religion while they grew fatter was centred upon themselves, magnified unto eternity, as a body both male and female—which phantom seemed to them a virtue, not a vice, naturally.

The celibate Rappites conducted a successful experiment in one form of sensory deprivation, and were consequently visited by an Angel.

"All were agreed, basically, as to the nature of this world, a poor substitute for the world beyond apprehension by man's sensory equipment, which was defective, as if he had been born deaf, blind and dumb." The original Adam was hermaphrodite, and fell from grace because he "had been disturbed unreasonably by the female spirit of the ever waxing and waning moon, by the sexual copulation of all beings but himself. From that mistaken urge in the beginning had come about this unstable fabric, man's mortal life." Miss Young contrasts the comfortable life of the Rappites with the uncomfortable life produced in New Harmony by Robert Owen's experiment in rational, humanist, common sense living, which failed and produced drunkenness and worse. "Perhaps even the drunken consciousness was as valid an expression of the cosmos as blind reason—so much happening without reason, as when the fairest were cut off in the flower of their life and the good died young." She explores this contrast and coalescing between belief in common sense and reason, and the obsession with what we cannot know, in this book, with some wit and a balance provided partly by the reader's own awareness of the historical Robert Owen who was and was not the phantasm she presents.

There is a passage, describing a Quaker, one of Owen's associates, which is of particular interest. He is a nervous man, with "an unfortunate sensory equipment" "like an Aeolian harp played upon by every wind." Miss Young tells us that

> he felt that he had not been endowed naturally with a sense of reason, order and correct standards. His nearest approach to happiness was his feeling of deprivation—that he was not limited to the things near at hand, but was amorphous, and being everywhere, was in no particular place, as if he was himself the very idea of all mankind.

I SHOULD LIKE TO ARGUE that the reproduction of this state of mind—a sense of deprivation producing a sense of being an "amorphous idea of all mankind" explains the appeal of *Miss MacIntosh* to a contemporary audience.

We are, as a society, the Americans more than the English, increasingly obsessed with hallucinatory states, with the disembodied mind. This obsession shows itself in the interest in drugs, from Aldous Huxley to the effects of morning glory seeds on teenagers, in the novels and plays of Beckett, in the sudden increase of interest in the existential implications of

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

studies of schizophrenia (particularly the work of R. D. Laing), in our interest in Eastern asceticisms, in the novelist's preoccupation (with which I began this review) with the image-forming process as a subject in itself. We need to find what is basically human in ourselves and the evidence of our senses has become suspect—partly because "common sense" in the sense of *normal* experience has become less easy to define. Painters paint pictures *about* optics; *trompe-l'oeil* acquires a significance beyond the skill that went into making it. I think this interest explains something about the literary phenomena about which Lukács complains.

> The "modernist" novel identifies a subjective vision with reality itself... the rejection of narrative objectivity, the surrender to subjectivity, may take the form of Joyce's stream of consciousness, or Musil's active passivity, his "existence without qualities" or of Gide's *acte gratuit*.... As individual character manifests itself in life's moments of decision, so too in literature. If the distinction between abstract and concrete potentiality vanishes, if man's inwardness is identified with an abstract subjectivity, human personality must necessarily disintegrate.... The disintegration of personality is matched by the disintegration of the outer world.... The German poet, Gottfried Benn, for instance, informs us that "there is no outer reality, there is only human consciousness, constantly building, modifying, rebuilding new worlds out of its own creativity."[2]

As Freud remarked tartly, man's exaltation of mind over matter is perennially surprising. *Miss MacIntosh* is as a whole an image of this process. That it is not as compelling as it might be is due partly to certain *literary* inadequacies. The first is a misconception of the possible effect of a symbol, and more particularly a steady stream of literary symbols, on the reader's sensibility. Donne's sudden paradoxes, T. S. Eliot's transparent visionary moments, whose wit underlies Miss Young's flow of words, depend on a sudden shock to be contemplated in silence. Edmund Wilson tells us that Valéry saw a poem as "a heavy weight which the poet has carried to the roof bit by bit—the reader is the passer-by on whom the weight is dropped all at once and who consequently receives from it an overwhelming impression, a complete aesthetic effect."[3] 1197 pages of such symbols tend to be overwhelming to the point of being simply stunning.

Also Miss Young's symbols have too often a slack, literary quality, an automatic verbal slickness. Too often she descends to the pure

[2] George Lukács, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, London (1962).

[3] Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle*.

Two important new novels

PETRU DUMITRIU

WESTWARD LIES HEAVEN

The world of the West freshly and acutely observed by a writer whose literary reputation was established with '*Incognito*.'
'Gigantic, original, fascinating' LE SOIR *30s*

GWYN GRIFFIN

A LAST LAMP BURNING

A major novel of Naples by one of the most powerful storytellers of our time.
'That rare creation these days, a real novel full of vitality and flavour' LITERARY GUILD OF AMERICA
5th September *30s*

YEVTUSHENKO

POEMS
Translated by R. Milner Gulland and Peter Levi

A new selection of poems chosen by the author and showing fresh aspects of his work.
Collins/Harvill 25s

MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE

TREAD SOFTLY FOR YOU TREAD ON MY JOKES

Essays from the last 20 years: stimulating, contentious, provocative.
Subjects include Randolph Churchill, D. H. Lawrence, the Monarchy, Muggeridge's life with the B.B.C., Frank Harris, Sex, and Max Beerbohm. *30s*

COLLINS

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whimsy of "God was dog, an old dog barking at the heaving surf" or the frothy, remote effect of Mr. Spitzer opening dead Cousin Hannah's trunks and finding only symbols *again*—they are full of clouds, snow, mirrors, etc. One develops a hunger for something concrete, somewhere.

Finally, a study of sensory deprivation in a sensorily deprived mode loses reality so early that its impact is too easy to shake off. Edmund Wilson said also that "the words of our speech are not musical notation and what the symbols of Symbolism really were were metaphors detached from their subjects."[4] Miss Young's metaphors (and characters) appear in many cases never to have had any experienced subjects. Miss MacIntosh is never substantiated as the image of the desirable tangible sense, before her presence and her personality disintegrate. And Miss Young's exaltation of the imagination is in the last resort too facile, too literary.

She describes Coleridge, in *Angel in the Forest*, as "a wobbling explorer of the infinite, a queer fellow as yellow-skinned as a mummy and nostalgic for distance" and attributes to him the view that

> Man must go forth to the bride who is death, there being no other way to resolve polarities and even this might be ineffectual. All constellations exist in the warped mind, as well as unsuspected whirlwinds, gulfs, streams, and seas of Sargasso. Jonah might even swallow the whale. The one plan was ever to love all things both great and small though the islands fled away and the mountains were not found and there remained only the soul of man which was perhaps the entirety of experienced reality to begin with.

The limitations of this are indicative of her limitations as a myth-maker. Sense has been done away with too early in the process. Hobbes, in one of those verbal flashes that mean more and something other than he meant by them, said "Imagination is nothing but decaying sense." Miss Young exhibits the decay without the sense. Coleridge and Wordsworth saw the imagination as a relationship between perceiver and object, not a swallowing. Some *literary* tact is at least required before we can do away with the object. Wordsworth, extolling "*those obstinate questionings/Of sense and outward things/Fallings from us, vanishings; Blank misgivings of a Creature/Moving about in worlds not realised*" was not annihilating sense. The *Immortality* ode grew from an experience in childhood in which, he said, "I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence . . . and many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or a tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality." Miss Young plunges into the abyss and engulfs the whale altogether too simple-mindedly and whole-heartedly. Melville's voyage over the seas of the mind in search of the one grand white hooded phantom is moving partly because the novel also contains the precise, sensually excited descriptions of harpooning, tackle, stripping of blubber from real whales, real blood and foam.

THE CONTEMPORARY INTEREST in sensory deprivation has extended to experiments in which subjects, floated in baths of glycerine in the dark, lose their sense of weight and direction. After a while they become hallucinated and begin to talk. In some cases, apparently, the personalities of the guinea-pigs have been permanently damaged. The actualities of glycerine bath, brainwashing, schizophrenia do seem to me, for reasons I don't fully understand, powerful modern images of our condition. But I do not think a great literary image of what we have to learn from the glycerine bath would really look like *Miss MacIntosh*. There is something much more moving in R. D. Laing's descriptions of his conversations with the schizophrenic "Ghost of the weed garden" in *The Divided*

[4] *Axel's Castle.*

Duckworth Books

M. A. SELJOUK

Corpses

Medhi Ali Seljouk, the young Pakistani author of *My Goddess: a Devotional* (Duckworth, 1959), a long poem much prized by connoisseurs of outlandish English vocabulary, has here produced his first prose work. This is a book of sketches telling the stories of twelve of the men and women whose corpses he has been confronted with at various times during his stormy life—he is still only thirty; but this unpromising title gives no idea of the charm and Tchekovian wistfulness of these little vignettes of life in Pakistan, South America, Haiti and other odd corners of the world.

Driven in his teens from his native Hyderabad State, Seljouk tells in an introduction the true story of some of his own terrible sufferings, concluding laconically: "Since most of you have taken the stories of massacres and pogroms I have listed above as fiction, you might as well take these indvidual stories to be fiction too."

It is one of those rare books which can truthfully be called entirely original in conception.

15*s. net* (*by post* $2.25)

3 Henrietta St. London W.C.2

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Self than in the whole of this novel. There, as in *Angel in the Forest*, studies of deprivation are contained in, and intensified by the "normal" framework of clinic or history, even when that framework is questioned.

Miss MacIntosh is finally too hybrid and fanciful an image of negation. One ends up feeling that one can, like Dr. Johnson, kick a stone, observe the more or less normal functioning of one's own sensory equipment, and say "Thus I refute you." But one cannot thus refute either the reality of the glycerine bath, or the imaginative truth of Melville's exploration of what underlies appearances.

Penny Worlds of the Poets

By Denis Donoghue

RANDALL JARRELL sang, in his last poems,[1] of arms and the growing boy, the penny world he bought to eat with Mama, Pop, and Dandeen. His themes are loss, decay, estrangement. The terms reach to a world of work and play, then and now, young and after, "the world under the world," linked with "the first Rome of childhood." *Back in Los Angeles, we missed/Los Angeles,* he says in "Thinking of the Lost World." Hence the compulsion of memory, lest by losing something he lose everything. This is why so many of the experiences are seen under glass or "encased in crystal," and the death of the ball turret gunner, in a famous poem, is a sinister version of the boyhood image, the magic gone wrong. The memorable poems happen when there is a fine balance of loss and gain; or rather, when the sense of loss is animated by an equal sense of the value persisting through loss. "Next Day" is in this line one of the most beautiful poems, tender, grave, and calm: it is, gracefully, what it is, having set aside the grandiose and lugubrious thing it might have been. "The Lost Children" is a poem for one's private anthology, to put between Frost's "After Apple-Picking" and Yeats' "A Deep-Sworn Vow," keeping excellent company. And there are other poems here to learn by heart.

We know that Jarrell was a vivid man, something of a wit, but we are slow to relish in poems a wit merely verbal. There are moments, as sometimes in *Pictures from an Institution*, when the wit runs out of hand, taking a virulent form: and a few of the present poems are cruel. Wit is Jarrell's way of getting even with the world when he thinks it time to get even; as he says of a friend's wife that she stood by her husband "like a plaster Joan of Arc." The same woman *"held out/Her deck of smiles, I cut, and she dealt."* But mostly the wit is fair, the form a genuine perception takes. A boy hears a Chopin prelude coming from next door, the notes hammered "like alphabet blocks." "It's played with real feeling," he recalls, "the feeling of being indoors practising." Seeing animals sitting around purring or panting, he says: "If only people purred and panted!" And in the poem "Washing": *"But as old hens like to say,/The world isn't chickenhearted."*

Jokes apart, these poems are never afraid of their feelings, or ashamed of them, or proud of them: this is the source of their humanity. Jarrell defends the natural thing, the good thing, liking the way a baby bat hangs on tight to its mother's tail and the different way an owl tests the corners of the night. It is typical of his goodwill that in an art-gallery he notices the guard before he looks at the pictures, observing that the patrons "walk through him as if he were a reflection." Typical, too, that when a girl talks of "the dailiness of life" he saves the day with an image of water, marvellously cold. So, generally and specifically in a wonderful love-poem, "Woman," he redeems the time. It is exciting to see him doing this, sometimes getting help from other men, the Frost of "The Subverted Flower," the Ransom of "Prelude to an Evening." As here:

A girl hesitates a moment in mid-air
And settles to the ground a wife, a mother.
Each evening a tired spirit visits
Her full house; wiping his feet upon a mat
Marked Women and Children First, *the husband looks*
At this grown woman. She stands there in slacks
Among the real world's appliances,
Women and children; kisses him hello
Just as, that morning, she kissed him goodbye,
And he sits down, till dinner, with the paper.
This home of theirs is haunted by a girl's
Ghost.

LOUIS SIMPSON'S POEM "The Goodnight" is the kind of poem one would put beside "The Lost

[1] *The Lost World*. By RANDALL JARRELL. Eyre & Spottiswoode, 18s.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Children" if it were a time for strict comparison: the same theme, roughly the same stance. But Mr. Simpson's poem is short of grace, a little wooden, its order (to use Stevens' phrase) too Plantagenet, too fixed. Mr. Simpson rarely discovers an order in experience; he imposes his own, instead. The early poems have good, substantial themes, love, death, fear, America, war, and every resource in their language except a flexible rhythm. They are stiff, always on parade. The voice is an imperative, no nonsense, but it might be any voice, sufficiently endowed with rank, talent, and will. The voice speaks of "the square called Times," not Times Square. If it wants a rhyme for "fat" it shouts for "automat," "tobacco" gets "Monaco," "sober," rather desperately, gets the "ober" of *Oberleutnant*. Efficiency is not in question, only its charmlessness.

Mr. Simpson's terms of reference are impressive. He sets fact against dream, dream against fact. When the fact is war or the hideousness of things, the dream is legend, Aegean myth, poetic couplets, madrigals of nostalgia, Elizabethan song. Redwood trees are denied by the used-car lot. "This middleclass life" is set against that other, Aegean life, those lucky ones born *"to walk in procession/To the temple, singing."* The juxtaposition is often powerful, but the power is won at some cost to grace, civility, and style. The poems ask to be read, as they seem to have been written, on a high horse. And many of them would be hateful if we took Keats literally for they have, indeed, a palpable design upon us: "Islanders" in one way, "I Dream that in a City" in another. The poet browbeats the reader, as when he adds significance to a noun by inserting the word "dark" before it. Orpheus "pursued his dark descent," San Francisco, "darkest of cities," "the dark race of poets," "my dark preoccupation," "Let the word rise, making dark strokes in the air."

Perhaps the most fruitful element in Mr. Simpson's poems[2] is their sense of history, rarely an American possession. This is the way his conscience works, by remembering what America has forgotten: hence the poems about Pocahontas, Mark Twain, Orpheus, Magdalene. It takes an effort, this, but it is worthwhile. One of the best poems is "Mississippi," an early one from *Good News of Death*, unusually responsive to the small things; like Brady's photographs of the Civil War, where the men are "still tilted in the charges where they died." It is exhilarating to find that the new poems, written since *At the End of the Open Road*, maintain this care. "The Tailor's Wedding" and "In the Time of Villa" are splendid, partly because they don't try so hard to be right, they don't think that the new American Rome must be built in a day. About these poems it is easy to care, as Mr. Simpson cares about the Italian tailor enough to let him be.

In the door a handkerchief waves,
And the tailor turns away
Thinking—the thoughts that tailors have.

And so my real life, my feelings
Are left on the cutting-room floor
And swept away with a broom.

A MEETING BETWEEN Louis Simpson and R. S. Thomas would be an interesting occasion. Mr. Simpson is fierce in defence of values which he has uneasily acquired. Mr. Thomas is sure of his values, but a little bland in their possession.[3] In "For the Record" he thinks it enough that Prytherch, in the War, dug for the victory of "Life," helping it through the door "of earth and beast," *"quietly repairing/The rents of history with your hands."* Perhaps it is. But Mr. Thomas' assumptions are never tested, only deployed as if there could be no question, any more than "the movement of the wind over grass." His penny world is the field, Wales, continuities so compelling that irritating things, like wars, do not matter. *"Violence has been/ And will be again."* Prytherch is not to care: he is to "turn aside," neither forward nor back. In the fields there are *"only the year's two/ Solstices, and patience between."* Living by this truth, Mr. Thomas finds it easy to use phrases like "the high pastures of the heart," because he owns those pastures, they are his gear, tackle, and trim, "simple and poor." But he trades a little upon rural certainty. He makes a virtue out of every occasion, thereby proving himself virtuous, as in the poem "There," where the tact is advertised. So town is rebuked by country, traffic by fields, smoke by breath, streets by flowers and patience. This does not destroy the poems, but it qualifies their achievement. In the best poems there is still "a place for the genuine"; as in "The Moor" where Mr. Thomas says, wonderfully perceptive, *"It was like a church to me./I entered it on soft foot,/ Breath held like a cap in the hand."* And there is a jewel of a poem called "Exchange," all delicacy:

She goes out.
I stay in.
Now we have been
So long together
There's no need
To share silence;

[2] *Selected Poems*. By LOUIS SIMPSON. Oxford University Press, 21s.

[3] *Pietà*. By R. S. THOMAS. Rupert Hart-Davis, 16s.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

YALE

THE SHAPE OF MEDIEVAL HISTORY

Studies in Modes of Perception

by William J. Brandt

Through an analysis of medieval chronicles and scientific papers, the author demonstrates that modes of perception, unconscious although learned, determine how men view and understand the world. 43s net

THE BROKEN CENTER

Studies in the Theological Horizon of Modern Literature

by Nathan A. Scott, Jr.

'The most powerful and original of all Mr Scott's always interesting work . . . a book which introduces fascinating and highly significant new material, and by the use of it performs what is in essence a new kind of critical act.' – R. W. B. LEWIS 37s 6d net

RONSARD'S SONNET CYCLES

A Study in Tone and Vision

by David Stone, Jr.

'A successful attempt to relate text to biography to a degree that, as far as I know, has not been achieved before for Ronsard.' DONALD M. FRAME 45s net

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS

70 Great Russell Street WC1

ADAM

300th issue

A hitherto unpublished essay on Daniel Defoe by James Joyce; Two unknown short stories by Chekhov; Forty-six Letters by Katherine Mansfield; H. G. Wells—Maxim Gorky Correspondence; A Tribute to Jean Cocteau by Rosamond Lehmann, Ronald Duncan, Darius Milhaud, André Germain, Milorad, Simenon.

Poems by W. H. Auden, Robert Graves, Michel Butor, Ossip Zadkine, Eugenio Montale, Kathleen Raine, Aragon, Herbert Read, Lucebert, Jorge Luis Borges, Paul Celan, Peter Levi, A. Alvarez, Wolf Mankowitz, Anne Sexton.

Essays by Arthur Koestler, L. P. Hartley, Edouard Roditi.

'I know only of three magazines which survive unaltered from the thirties: *Partisan Review*, *The Wine and Food Quarterly*, and Miron Grindea's indestructible *Adam* which keeps popping up with invaluable special numbers though apparently expected to live on air.'
Cyril Connolly in ART & LITERATURE

'A fanfare surely for *ADAM 300*, a magazine of the arts that has mastered the secret of survival in a world notorious for its high mortality rate. Grindea, one feels, could have got a contribution out of God had he been a writer.' SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

'A resplendent illustrated affair, beautifully printed. The success of this venture depends, I need hardly say, on the number of copies sold.' Paul Johnson in NEW STATESMAN

'Unlike anything else in London or Paris literary scene.' C. P. Snow in THE AUTHOR

'A triumph of pure disinterestedness.'
TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

'Cette courageuse revue bilingue—il faut admirer le fait qu'elle maintient sa voix française à Londres.' MERCURE DE FRANCE

232 pages, 18/- or $3, available from 28 Emperors Gate, London SW.7. Annual subscription for the new series *including No. 300,* **£2. 10s. or $7.10.**

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The old bed
Remains made
For two; spirits
Mate apart
From the sad flesh.
Growing thinner
On time's diet
Of bile and gall.

SEAMUS HEANEY'S WORLD is Ireland, Derry, to a Southerner like myself the Black North, but there is no Border in his themes: picking blackberries; watching a rat; turkeys; churning butter; an old photograph; a child's death; shooting a fox; divining water. Stevens told us that the "something said" in a poem is important, but "only in so far as the saying of that particular something in a special way is a revelation of reality." Mr. Thomas' description of walking on the moor is a revelation of reality. Mr. Heaney's poems[4] are always parables and sometimes revelations, but mostly their design upon us is to remind us of modes of reality which, the world being too much, we have forgotten. As in Mr. Thomas' poems, it is hard to write in the rural-moral way without sounding a prig. The case is complicated by the fact that Mr. Heaney's themes, truly rural, are given with remarkably mechanistic imagery. Internal evidence would suggest that he grew up on a farm in the years after the War and found excitement by seeing every war-film for miles around. The noise of smacking a pregnant cow is a depth-charge, rows of dead turkeys are "cold squadrons," gulls come in a flotilla, taking a position to watch a rat is establishing a bridgehead, moths eaten by a trout are torpedoed, a house is bombarded by the wind. In the poem "Waterfall" the water goes over "like villains dropped screaming to justice." When the water divining comes off we get *"spring water suddenly broadcasting/ Through a green aerial its secret stations."* Much of this is the ordinary overwriting of first poems; as turkey-noise is "an overture of gobbles," a rat is a rodent, a wish is a lust, and pregnant is gravid. But it disables the language, and prompts us to look at the attitudes with some severity. In the best poems, like "Follower" and "Mid-Term Break," Mr. Heaney's subject is so demonstrably there that the search for a clever image is called off. These poems, neat enough for any purpose, are "true." Here is a bit from the poem about his father:

I wanted to grow up and plough,
To close one eye, stiffen my arm.
All I ever did was follow
In his broad shadow round the farm.

I was a nuisance, tripping, falling,
Yapping always. But today
It is my father who keeps stumbling
Behind me, and will not go away.

IT IS THIRTY YEARS too late to review the *Preludes* of Conrad Aiken.[5] *Preludes for Memnon* came out in 1931, *Time in the Rock* in 1936: the present book gives both. The poetry is very much of its own day, but this does not mean that it has nothing for us. Cool readers will find Mr. Aiken exotic, perhaps overblown: he has no time for the throw-away feeling, the rural lesson casually read. He lives neither in Wales nor in Derry, but in a world of the spirit heavy with Freudian care. The voluptuous cadence hopes to make up for the penury of the day, Stevens' "malady of the quotidian." Some rival called the poet Comrade Aching. In the poems the ache is relieved by music. Blackmur called Stevens "the longest repetition of sweet sounds in the world," and I am tempted to steal the phrase for Aiken, instead, because Stevens knew that there is a time for silence, for pauses in the music, but Mr. Aiken is terrified by the pause. So the music goes on and on. This is why *Preludes to Memnon,* ravishing in local detail, is oppressive as a long sequence, always reaching for the Sublime. Mr. Aiken commits himself to whatever happens in consciousness; analysis, dissection, exposure, the drift of image, anything. He is a poet of process, mood, yielding, wind, stream, unravelling the pattern. Hence in "the unending glossary of the world" he loves *"the bright ambiguous syllable/Of which the meaning is both yes and no."* So he drops the reins from the mind, urging it to "go with the wind." These syllables have more to do with his poetry than the dense particulars, the "coffee, figs, and Barsac" memorably evoked in an early Prelude. "That angel of bright consciousness" does not want to be tied to earthly things: it wants the heady freedom of the dictionary. What the reader wants, perhaps, is a music less mad, a wine less sweet. When he wants these things he also wants proof of an imagination not merely rich but constructive, making a new pattern to replace the old one unravelled. Not a Plantagenet order; but an order, a "book of reconciliation," well-made, well-written. Mr. Aiken's poems and novels are dear to psycho-analysts, beginning with Freud who admired *Great Circle.* The reason is that Mr. Aiken is immensely resourceful in unravelling the fixed patterns, getting the patient to break himself open. I cannot find that he does the second job with equal finesse, putting the patient together again. *Time in the*

[4] *Death of a Naturalist.* By SEAMUS HEANEY. Faber & Faber, 18s.

[5] *Preludes.* By CONRAD AIKEN. Oxford University Press, 10s. (paper-edition).

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rock is more profound than the *Preludes* because it recognises the claim of the second job: it is a book to place beside Stevens' *Credences of Summer*, one integrity supporting another. Quotation is pointless: Mr. Aiken is not revealed in the single phrase. I can only give a few references, especially to Poems LXXXI, LXXXII, and XCIII. The last is one of the most distinguished passages in modern poetry, the music full and various, the sounds and pauses miraculously attuned, a poetry at once literal and noble:

What can you say
that these have not said, are not saying,
you with your consciousness of time? time
swings with the tendril, sings in the birdsong, clings
with the bird-claw, it is time
which thrusts like the leaf's eye from the cold earth.
These already know death in the mere adventure
in the mere going forth they know and seek it gladly,
they embrace it tightly, what can you say
that is not known to the cold claws of the thrush?

[6] *Selected Poems.* By RAFAEL ALBERTI. Translated by BEN BELITT. University of California Press, $6.50 and Cambridge University Press, 52s.

IT IS NOT, PERHAPS, too late to welcome the selection[6] from Rafael Alberti offered by Ben Belitt, an inspired translator. After the perturbation of *Sobre los ángeles* (1929) Alberti survived by remembering, in silence, his Paradise lost, *la arboleda perdida.* "Stripped of old azures," he kept himself alive by rehearsing them, the doors and windows of El Puerto. And eventually he found a new penny world, his own summer credences, *Pleamar.* Remembrance is the "necessitous grammar" invoked in *De ayer para hoy* before the "virginal verb" can be spoken. Stevens said that the tradition of Spain is the tradition of reality, as the tradition of Italy is the tradition of imagination. Alberti says: *"La vida hiende vida en plena vida."* So we think of his sense of life as Mediterranean, his nostalgias rising from time and earth: *"Nostalgias de la guerra, de la mar y el colegio."* And thinking of English, Irish, Welsh, and American poets beside these poems of Alberti, one sees in him a density, a plenitude of remembered things, a *mundo,* missing in them. Beside him, English and American poets seem almost impoverished, poets of one season. The same feeling arises in reading Machado, a sense of roots going deep. Many English and American poets, so gifted, so thoughtful, give the impression of not having

METHUEN'S MODERN NOVELS

A new series devoted to simultaneous publication in hardcover and paperback of outstanding works of fiction by a wide variety of established and promising writers.

The first four titles, to be published September 15th

JAKOV LIND
Landscape in Concrete 25s; Paperback, 12s 6d

HALLDOR LAXNESS
The Fish Can Sing 32s 6d; Paperback, 15s

MICHEL BUTOR
Degrees 32s 6d; Now in paperback, 12s 6d

BERTOLT BRECHT
Tales from the Calendar 21s; Now in paperback, 10s 6d

METHUEN

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enough to live on; as if they had only themselves. Mr. Aiken would insist that this is enough. I doubt it. Alberti has a poem "A Luis Cernuda," written when Cernuda was exiled in England and Alberti in Argentina. (Unaccountably, Mr. Belitt has not included it.) This glorious poem could not have been written in Mr. Aiken's world, that "world of which self-knowledge is the centre." It would be more of a miracle than I could believe, if it were to come now from England, Wales, or (alas) Ireland. It seems a characteristically Spanish response to "the sigh of what is" and the equal sigh of what, tragically, is not.

Goulasch

The New Radicalism in America, 1889–1963: The Intellectual as a Social Type. By CHRISTOPHER LASCH. *Chatto & Windus*, 45s.

CHRISTOPHER LASCH'S book has stirred up a good deal of comment. Some reactions have been highly favourable, to judge from the dustjacket: "bold and superbly written" (Richard Hofstadter), "brilliantly thought out . . . a book to take seriously" (Alfred Kazin), "timely" (*New York Times*). Sharply unfavourable reactions include those of John P. Roche ("Dada historicism") and of Arthur Schlesinger ("a poor and pretentious book"). This division of opinion is interesting in itself.

The commendations are understandable. Though Lasch is a professor (at Iowa State University) he does not suffer from the proverbial academic vices. His prose is fluent and lively, his argument not denatured by the timid scholar's *perhapses* and *virtuallys*. He addresses himself to an important subject in what looks like a fresh approach. He appears to offer ways of distinguishing between "new" and "old" radicals (*i.e.*, between what came before 1890 and what after), and between "new radicals" and "progressives." He avoids conventional listings. Though novelists, poets, and critics are referred to, he does not restrict himself to their familiar testimony. He does not portray his intellectuals as a band of rebellious heroes, to be congratulated on their prescience and commiserated with on their alienation.

Lasch tries to do something more ambitious. He mixes unexpected individuals and groups with the more obvious: Jane Addams, the founder of Chicago's Hull-House settlement; some assorted feminists; Randolph Bourne, the prophet of Youth who died at 32; Woodrow Wilson's adviser Colonel House, the author of a bizarre anonymous novel; Mabel Dodge Luhan, the wealthy Bohemian who ranged between New York, Paris, and New Mexico in a persevering pursuit of happiness; the editors of the *New Republic* at two periods of conscience-wrestling—the years of American neutrality, 1914–17, and the early years of the Great Depression; Lincoln Steffens, the muck-raking journalist who later conceived an enthusiasm for the Soviet Union; and a mixed bag of more recent "radicals," among whom are Dwight Macdonald, Norman Mailer, and Arthur Schlesinger. The biographical portraits are entertaining, and arresting remarks are to be found throughout the book. His method then has the virtue of novelty. Ideas are not easy to handle. As Lasch points out in a pleasantly breezy introduction, "representative" figures are usually mediocrities; the attempt to catch the intellectual shifts of an era through the inner lives of apparently unrepresentative figures is worth making.

In American textbooks, Jane Addams is the young woman who sacrifices her middle-class comfort to live among slum-dwellers; Randolph Bourne is the gallant youth who writes glowing prose despite his huge head and his freak's body (José Ferrer could play him as the Toulouse-Lautrec of Morningside Heights); Lincoln Steffens is the fearless exposer of corrupt city-government; and—in the latest chapter of these texts—the Bundys and Galbraiths and Schlesingers begin to stand as the scholar-ornaments of the Kennedy Renaissance. Instead of this simple view, Lasch offers hidden clues. Jane Addams suffers from the collapse of formal religious belief, cannot abide her stepmother, and does not always tell the truth in her autobiographical *Twenty Years at Hull-House*. Randolph Bourne's brief history typifies the collapse of the family-system. He is one of the Founding Fathers, if we may use so paradoxical an expression, of the American tradition which consists in repudiating tradition. He is also a waspish person, and so physically repulsive that even his friends can hardly bear to look at him. Lincoln Steffens is never really a reformer: he admires crooks because like himself they are estranged from society. The editors of the *New Republic*, in both epochs, are a wordy bunch, full of bad advice and doubtful theory. They love to think that they have the ear of the President (Wilson) in 1914–17, and display a curious relish for "tough" policies. The "pragmatic liberals" of the Kennedy administration, according to Lasch, reveal this tendency in a more extreme form. Self-deceived and inclined

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American University Publishers Group

26–28 Hallam Street, London, W.1

RECENT AND FORTHCOMING TITLES

Charles H. Shattuck
SHAKESPEARE PROMPTBOOKS
A Descriptive Catalogue
University of Illinois Press Ltd.
553 pages *95s. 0d.*

Jörn Donner
THE PERSONAL VISION OF INGMAR BERGMAN
Indiana University Press Ltd.
276 pages *45s. 0d.*

Helen S. Corsa
CHAUCER: POET OF MIRTH AND MORALITY
University of Notre Dame Press Ltd.
360 pages *55s. 0d.*

Robert Leet Patterson
PLATO ON IMMORTALITY
Pennsylvania State University Press Ltd.
142 pages *35s. 0d.*

Helen Corke
D. H. LAWRENCE: THE CROYDON YEARS
University of Texas Press Ltd.
38s. 0d.

James F. Carens
THE SATIRIC ART OF EVELYN WAUGH
University of Washington Press
195 pages *37s. 6d.*
To be published in September

Alicia Ostriker
VISION AND VERSE IN WILLIAM BLAKE
University of Wisconsin Press Ltd.
256 pages *45s. 0d.*

THE SUNDAY MIRROR

NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF CHILDREN'S ART

Royal Institute Galleries
195 Piccadilly, London, W.1

16th September to 16th October, 1966

10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Weekdays
2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays

Admission 1/- Children (under 16) 6d.

FREE ADMISSION FOR SCHOOL PARTIES

PAINTINGS DRAWINGS SCULPTURE AND VARIETY OF CRAFTS

Over 850 exhibits by boys and girls aged 5 to 16 selected from an original entry of over 52,000

ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Sir Basil Spence
Mr. Alan Davie
Mr. Tom Hudson
Mr. Andrew Nairn
Mr. Victor Pasmore
Mr. Frank Tuckett

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to self-pity, accustomed to being men without a recognised place, they are naïvely delighted at their sudden involvement in affairs of state. Even Norman Mailer, for all his waywardness, shows the same symptoms—"fantasies of omnipotence" together with "fears of hostility and persecution."

So says Lasch. The pleasure to be derived from him is akin to that of reading reviews of books they despise by Malcolm Muggeridge or A. J. P. Taylor; or to siding with Lytton Strachey when he discloses the soft underbelly of eminent Victorians. Lasch appeals to our sense that the greater part of the formulas by which intellectuals have tried to live in the past eighty years now look sorrily inadequate. To a jaded eye the intellectual scene in these decades resembles a picnic place after a holiday, strewn with objects that have been discarded or lost. Lasch appeals in particular to one's sense of the mediocrity of much of *American* thought. This is Mary McCarthy's subject, carried back into history. Lasch catches his victims cramming things wilfully into inappropriate categories. He shows us people whose optimisms seem fatuous (education will produce a better world, America will stay out of war, youth knows best) and whose pessimisms hysterical (nobody understands us, the world is doomed, America is a nightmare). He has no difficulty in establishing that several of his sample of intellectuals were in some way neurotic, messianic, or both. Sometimes they changed their minds with ungainly speed; sometimes they could not make up their minds at all. A second-rate lot—and some of them were even anti-intellectual at heart. Much of this in Lasch is good fun, and quite salutary.

But now we must turn to criticisms. If they are unfair the fault lies with Professor Lasch. Instead of being original, his approach turns out to be merely eccentric: so eccentric that it is hard to be sure what he is getting at or whom. His terminology is hopelessly vague. The title and certain early remarks suggest that he has a group clearly in mind, but we soon lose direction. His "new radicals" are apparently to be differentiated from "old" ones by changes in society (exemplified by changed attitudes to religious belief, the family and in particular one's parents) which became noticeable about 1890. Other writers have seen significance in this date. Lasch's "radicals" are apparently to be differentiated from the "progressives" of *c.* 1900–1920, and from "liberals" generally, in being more fundamentally at odds with their society. This distinction too might be acceptable. His use of the term "middle class," which he admits to be imprecise, can be defended on the ground that the actual condition of middle-classness is imprecise, yet real, in the United States.

The trouble is that Lasch either ignores these approximate distinctions or juggles them to suit himself. He presents the "new radicals" as an alienated "class" and produces some interesting vignettes as evidence—quarrels with parents, hypochondria among the feminists, broken marriages, a habit of public confession in the form of memoirs which are indiscreet yet devious. But if this evidence is to be convincing we need to know whether such symptoms were rare before 1890, whether they were confined to those of a radical temperament, and whether they were more common in America than elsewhere. The facts are against him. Hypochondria was a characteristic feature of the lives of intelligent women throughout the 19th century, in crucial moments of their struggle to achieve a career. Florence Nightingale and Harriet Martineau are British examples. It was a feature also of the lives of men at times of frustration. George Washington and Charles Francis Adams were two Americans who led most unalienated public lives: both as young men were a prey to bouts of illness and misery. As for confessional writing, it has been prominent in European and American literature ever since the 17th century. And were family rows and broken homes confined to intellectuals' case-histories? If Lasch had been writing a book about the American upper class, whose existence he does not mention, he could have used much the same material to describe a malaise made up of rootlessness and self-hate; and the middle class was not always far behind.

These objections point to a more serious defect. In stressing alienation, Lasch seems to conceal the efforts made by his miscellaneous gallery to enter into American society and the aspects in which they mirrored rather than repudiated its behaviour. Most of the people he

NUDES IN RESEARCH STUDIES

If psycho-linguistic studies of erotic art and if the completion of the record of human anatomy add something to man's proper study of woman, then Jean Straker's photographic studies of the female nude, within the compass of the Department of Gynaecographic Studies, provide for such research a visual authority unmatched anywhere in the world.

For details of membership, illustrated booklet and specimen studies, send £1 ($5.00 by air) to

ACADEMY OF VISUAL ARTS

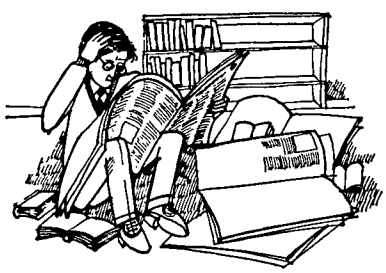
Studio House, 12 Soho Square, London, W.1, England

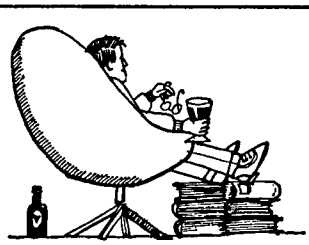
PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

deals with had active and even satisfying careers, except for Mabel Dodge with her private income. Were they trying to break out or to get in? And how far out were they? The early life of Lincoln Steffens is remarkably similar to the situation in George H. Lorimer's cosy *Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to His Son* (1902): indulgent father, bookish wandering son, ultimatum from father, son buckles down to work and finds he enjoys it. And why seek an elaborate explanation for Steffens' readiness to condone municipal graft? This was a newspaperman's outlook, not that of an alienated intellectual. It was widely shared by the American public or there would not have been so much corruption. Colonel House is a fascinating and somewhat pathetic person, but in what way was he a radical or an intellectual? In his surreptitious love of power he is, in American terms, more of a Mark Hanna or a Harry Hopkins; and neither of these was an egg-head. In his plea for strong government (the theme of his novel *Philip Dru, Administrator*), House is closer to the progressives, and indeed to Theodore Roosevelt, than to Lasch's nebulous team of radicals.

As Lasch defines the radicals—or rather as he goes on about them—they are disabled people. They cannot get into a right relationship with their society. Worse still, they apparently ought not even to try. At least that seems to be the moral of the episode of the *New Republic* editors and World War I (and of the final chapter). The illusion of power goes to their heads; they are full of preachments; and they are surprisingly bellicose. In truth their responses on this occasion are not very impressive. But the problem they faced was agonisingly complex: there were no entirely satisfactory answers. The only strong complaint that may be levelled against them is that they behaved too much like the rest of their fellow-countrymen. But to judge from the final chapter, Professor Lasch does not believe that radicals and intellectuals and pragmatic liberals (by now the vocabulary has fused together) can or ought to give a lead. Their role as well as their fate is to remain aloof. So he takes his swing at the intellectuals of the 1950s and 1960s—for getting into politics, for becoming expense-account bureaucrats, for enlisting like their would-be "tough" predecessors in power politics. Sidney Hook serves as an exhibit: here is a philosopher who is supposed to have turned into a professional anti-Communist.

Bits of this indictment carry weight. For me





Geopolitics can seem
Unnerving to the student
I n a world where reign supreme
Not nice men, nor prudent.
Never shirk it! Face the worst!
E vade the news no longer,
S imply have a Guinness first;
S oon you'll feel much stronger!

G.E.4202 B

For free copies of this analysis of world affairs do not *write to Chatham House. Apply direct to: Guinness, 8 Baker Street, London, W.1.*

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they are vitiated because they are too much in keeping with the book's whole technique, or effect, which is one of confused denigration. I do not think the author intended such an effect: he says that his concern is neither to praise nor to blame, but to analyse. The result, however, is to make nearly everyone sound silly, querulous, and disingenuous. Where he pays tribute to an idea or a person, it is almost always in order to cut down some other idea or person. By his peculiar rules no radical behaviour can be fitting since no radical can fit in.

Some reviewers have described *The New Radicalism* as "polemical." A better word would be "contrary." But one sees what they mean, and why the book has also been called "a tract for the times." It is an exhibit in the continuing history of the American intellectual, rather than the history itself, and it will be a document for a future Lasch. In it he will no doubt discern the vitality and the muddle which have, as Professor Lasch rightly says, characterised the circumstances of those who deal in ideas. The future scholar will detect in it the war of the generations, a war waged largely within the intellectual community. Lasch voices, for instance, the irritation which post-1945 intellectuals feel for the attitudes of the preceding generation, with their swing from the dogmas of Marxism to those of the Cold War. And he displays a kind of sophisticated coolness which is very much of the 1960s. We are all children of our particular age, as he set out to demonstrate. He demonstrates it most strikingly for one intellectual who is not explicitly analysed in the book—namely, Christopher Lasch.

Marcus Cunliffe

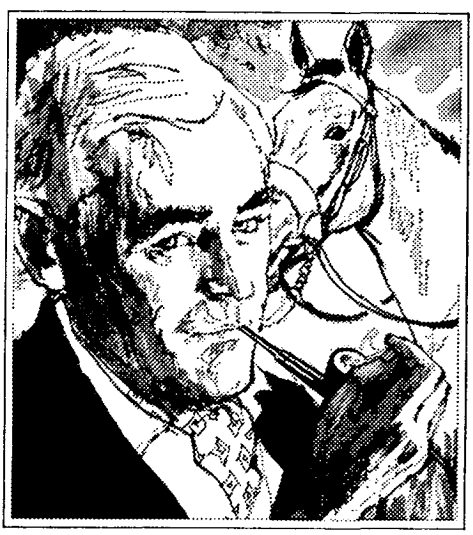
BINDER

THE ENCOUNTER Easibinder enables readers, for half the cost of full binding, to preserve their copies in an attractive and durable format. Each copy of the magazine, as received, can be quickly inserted in the case and secured there. Copies can just as easily be removed. Each binder holds six issues.

The ENCOUNTER Easibinder costs 13s. or $2.00, including the cost of packing and posting by surface mail to any address in the world. There is no trade discount.

cool customer

Exmoor Hunt is a choice that reflects a mature sense of values. On the whole Exmoor Hunt smokers are pretty cool customers. Professional men who choose a pipe tobacco as carefully as they choose a partner or a friend . . . and they find the cool-smoking extra mellow character of Exmoor Hunt as dependable as the law of gravity. This famous Bristol blend is a traditional harmony of fine Virginia, Cavendish, Latakia and other aromatic tobaccos. Over the years it has built up a 'brand image' superior to that of many more expensive brands! Yet—at 6/6 an oz.—the choice of Exmoor Hunt is no extravagance.



EXMOOR HUNT

Broad or medium cut 1 oz. 6/6. 2 oz. vacuum tin 13/-.

the *extra* mellow mixture

Pipe? A Barling, naturally. EX15K

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POINTS OF THE COMPASS

From Abidjan to Fort Lamy

ABIDJAN: skyscrapers placed on the side of a steep hill that sticks out like a spit into a lagoon. On the left is the harbour; on the right the arm of water that separates the town centre from Cocody, the residential quarter, and the Hotel d'Ivoire, the cynosure of Abidjan. The centre is all modern buildings, shops, restaurants, and cafés with French and Ivoiriens sipping pastis and beer at cane tables on the terraces. *D.* tells me that he was last here six months ago. Since then there are two new tower blocks. What is decaying in Dakar is flourishing here. Abidjan is a boom town, which has preserved something of the French monumental sense of town-planning, and the drive up the central Boulevard de la République between tall buildings and green gardens full of trees and red trumpet-shaped flowers is spectacular. This is a big commercial city (but how poor the bookshops are compared with those in Dakar).

TWO OPINIONS on the pursuit of journalism in the Ivory Coast. *A journalist:* "No one talks politics here. Only business...." *A diplomat:* "They don't like speaking to journalists here. Houphouet does all the talking, but there's no chance of seeing him...."

VISIT to the new administrative block built round a quadrangle of lawn like an Oxford college, but dimly resembling a Japanese palace in style. Inside, the super-efficient air-conditioning is welcome even if it does make one's teeth chatter at first. A French press counsellor, Y., shrugs his shoulders and tells me (again!) that it is very unlikely that I shall be able to see anyone. He promises rather hopelessly to see what he can do, but telephone calls produce little—not even the right numbers. He then tells me to try the Foreign Office on the other side of the lawn, and we chat disconnectedly. Y. says that Houphouet-Boigny is *"un vrai seigneur"*—a phrase that seems to go rather beyond the usual polite remark about one's boss. He also displays distrust of American policy in the world in general and in the Ivory Coast in particular, getting red in the face with indignation as he tells me how Peace Corps volunteers have been known to criticise France's role in Africa (one can see how this might occur).

In thinking that "American capitalism wants to dominate Africa," Y. is not alone. There is much talk among the French in West Africa about a "dollar zone" including Liberia, Guinea, the Ivory Coast, and Sierra Leone; and the recent sale to American interests of the *Banque d'Afrique Occidentale Française* is held to be a proof of these sinister transatlantic designs. Possibly Americans are sometimes tactless and the ostentatiously anti-colonial phase of American policy—abandoned as soon as it became clear that it was not buying the U.S. anything—must have irritated French officials even more than it did British. Still, one would think that France might be glad to have some of the weight of economic aid and political advice to West Africa taken off its shoulders. But, as Pierre Daninos puts it, *"le Français se méfie"*: in Africa as in Europe.

WHAT ADDS TO THE difficulties of seeing anyone is the diplomatic flurry at present going on in Abidjan. Presidents Diori Hamani of Niger, Yaméogo of Upper Volta (now overthrown), and Grunitzky of Togo are all in town sweeping about in large cars with whistling police escorts and taking up the time of nearly every minister and high official. Naturally foreigners do not get a look in.

Abidjan (and President Houphouet-Boigny) are very much the centre of West African politics for the moment. Since last year's meeting at Nouakchott of French African heads-of-state which led to the formation of the *Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache* (OCAM), the "moderates" in West Africa have been on the offensive on a wide front: against Chinese infiltration, against Algerian and Egyptian "fishing in troubled waters" south of the Sahara, and, above all, against President Nkrumah's mania for meddling in his neighbours' affairs. No doubt, at the back of their minds, M. Houphouet-Boigny and his allies have the Congo as the horrid example of what happens when there is outside intervention in the affairs of an African state, but the final push towards Nouakchott seems to have been

THIS *is the second part of Anthony Hartley's journey through the new African states of the former French "Afrique Noire." His "From Dakar to Bamako" was published in the July* ENCOUNTER.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

given by the attempt to subvert Niger.[1] In any case, they would have had no desire to follow Nkrumah's erratic *caudillismo* and resented his assumption of leadership in African affairs. To put the heat on Nkrumah's Ghana is an openly admitted purpose of OCAM; it also enjoys the backing of France, always interested in strengthening stability within its ex-colonies; and its creation and consolidation have been pushed ahead with a speed and determination unusual in African politics. It is difficult not to see in this the fine hand of President Houphouet-Boigny who, ever since the Niger affair, has been engaged in practically continuous consultations with one or other of his fellow-presidents. The object of the present round amounts to a boycott of the subversive surroundings of Accra. This is another way of taking Nkrumah down a peg or two: *Cave Ghanam!*

EXPEDITION TO THE Hotel d'Ivoire. A taxi takes one round the lagoon to Cocody with its medley of modern style and Voltaic watchmen sleeping at the gates of white bungalows. At the top of the drive is the hotel: designed by Israeli architects, built by an international consortium, and promptly sold back to the Ivoirien government. Inside, Israeli influence is evident in the colour-schemes—curious blends of orange and violet—and the general success of the *décor*. It is certainly one of the most expensive hotels in the world, and the fact that it is used by Africans as well as by visiting European businessmen (to such an extent that it is to be enlarged) suggests that there is a section of the Ivoirien *élite* that is very well off indeed. As they sip their drinks and look down on the lagoon from the heights of Cocody, they are far removed from their fellow citizens who live in shacks at Treichville. The fruits of power are the same everywhere these days: luxury hotels, air-travel, whisky, and pigskin baggage are all part of a Mephistophelian package deal. Only in West Africa the Faustian reckoning is liable to be sudden and severe.

"HOW STABLE is the régime?" I have been asking this question ever since I arrived in the Ivory Coast. The answer seems to go something like this: President Houphouet-Boigny's position has much improved over the last year—in other words since he began to exert himself and cease to take his own supremacy for granted. In 1963 there were a series of plots, the most serious of which was caused by inter-tribal feeling. Agnis and Bétés combined against the Baoulé president, but the alliance was broken and the plot betrayed. In January 1965 six death sentences for "plotting against the state's security" were pronounced, while eighteen plotters were pardoned (who then had to make a public confession of their faults). In fact, there do not seem to have been any executions so far, and those who know M. Houphouet-Boigny appear convinced of his genuine reluctance to shed blood. It also seems to be true that he is "closer to his people" than many other African politicians.[2] His recent success in winning back Ivoirien students to his side after a three-day discussion with their representatives is held to be a sign of this. It is also a welcome innovation in Ivoirien politics.

Nonetheless the Ivory Coast is a dictatorship depending for stability on the efficiency of its security services. In this it is no different from other West African countries (there is not even now the exception of Nigeria). But Houphouet-Boigny still has at his command the art of persuasion, which he exercised as a minister of the French IVth Republic, and, for the time being, his supremacy seems unquestioned. As one of the pardoned plotters, M. Jérôme Alloh, put it (at an earlier stage in his career), "What importance is there to titles? After God there he

[1] In October 1964 armed members of the Niger opposition party, the *Sawaba*, crossed the frontier of that country and attacked customs posts and administrative buildings. When they were rounded up, it became clear from confessions and captured documents that they had received training in subversion and guerilla warfare at Nanking in China, Marnia in Algeria, and Mampong in Ghana. This incident undoubtedly had a powerful impact on the minds of many West African leaders. (See *Le Monde*, 4th February 1965.)

[2] The mysterious death in prison in 1964 of Ernest Boka, President of the Supreme Court, illustrates rather curiously how firmly Houphouet-Boigny's roots are planted in African soil. Announcing at a press conference (14th April 1964) that Boka had committed suicide, the President said that the dead man had been misled by a *marabout*, who had predicted a brilliant future for him, and showed suitcases belonging to him full of fetishes including two miniature coffins with Houphouet-Boigny's own photograph inside them. He then commented: "For a Westerner all this may appear childish. But we are at the heart of a great drama playing in black Africa. The fetish is the core of the problem, for behind each one of them there is the poison...."

This is a far cry from the Hotel d'Ivoire and the expanding business world of Abidjan. On his country estate at Yamoussokro Houphouet-Boigny, as he has said himself, is no longer President of the Republic, but a Baoulé chieftain inheriting the magical powers of his ancestors, before whose palace lies the pool with the sacred crocodiles and at whose gate stands the fetish tree. This closeness to African tradition is certainly a considerable political advantage for him and one which he uses consciously.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is. . . ." But the plots and intrigues will go on; without actually being God, no West African president can be quite sure of power, allies, friends. All that can be said is that, at the moment, the régime in the Ivory Coast looks rather more solid than its fellows in Senegal or Mali.

TABASKI. A Moslem festival, and everything is closed. *X.* takes me out into the country to see some fishing villages. We go along a good road where the forest has been cut back for some fifty yards on either side. From time to time we pass a car body thrown on the verge and mouldering into the ground. The usual ramshackle African buses and trucks whizz by at great speed. On the front of the driver's cabin they have names printed: "DIEU EST GRAND" or, less reassuringly, "ME FOUS DE LA MORT" (and they do).

We reach a lagoon where a wooden jetty is supposed to be the place of embarkation for a ferry that ships cars to the elongated island opposite. Some fishermen are sitting by the waterside doing complicated things to nets with both fingers and toes. They have no idea of when the ferry is expected, but they confirm the general idea that such a thing exists. We sit and wait. Pirogues go to and fro over the water but nothing appears that looks as if it could conceivably carry a car. We eat and drink; the heat rises from the oily lagoon, the dried leaves crackle on the sand, and vague wafts of smoked fish come from the direction of the cheerful fishermen. Children, naked except for a girdle, chase each other in the sun and come to ask for biscuits. They are all polite and kindly. No one seems to object to our picnicking almost on top of them.

After lunch still no ferry. So we set off along forest roads of red earth—red with the laterite that is the curse of African soils. In the forest it is quite dark with the sun only visible in glimpses far above. Above the track the branches meet, and the vegetation looks impenetrable enough short of cutting one's way through. There seem to be no villages here, only groups of two or three houses belonging to a single family or related families. To market their produce these people must walk to the main road, and the whole track is full of little bands of women (no men) carrying pots of grain or baskets of fruit and vegetables on their heads. The bright colours of their *pagnes* show up against the dark greens of the forest, and when they reach a clearing, for a moment they are streaked with sunlight. They do not appear to be in a hurry, but sway gracefully along without undignified haste; actually they cover ground rather fast. The forest itself seems endless, monotonously the same after the novelty of the first few miles has worn off. Even after an hour of it one feels oppressed by all this swarming vegetable life with which man has to come to terms. How tempting it would be to shout "Let me out!" Visitors to West Africa must be divided into those who prefer the savannah to the coastal forest and *vice versa*. The choice is one that indicates types of character—like preferring Corneille to Racine, Florence to Venice. The savannah for me any day.

AT LAST AN INTERVIEW: with M. Mathieu Ekra, the Minister of Information. He is also a member of the central committee of the party (*Parti démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire*) and has only just been given this particular job. He insists on the excellent economic position and the good relations the country has with its neighbours. "What about the reference to Ghana in the Nouakchott communiqué?" He tells me just how mischievous Nkrumah has been and how other West African countries are determined to put a stop to it. M. Ekra is efficient, cordial, cautious—so cautious that in half an hour's interview he manages to say nothing one did not know already—perhaps not surprisingly for the President has a habit of contradicting publicly (and, by implication, rebuking) those of his subordinates who talk for publication. However what he says and what others have said allows some sort of judgment on the present policies of the Ivory Coast seen in their wider African context.

The basis of the Ivory Coast experiment consists in offering the population solid economic satisfactions in return for their acceptance of the pervasive presence of French or French-speaking foreign advisers (those closest to the President are not French by origin, though they have usually served in French administrative posts) and of European firms who hardly employ any Africans in positions of responsibility. The desire is for development and modernisation above all things, and M. Houphouet-Boigny has been unwilling to let it be held up by premature "Africanisation." Similarly, in foreign affairs, the same end of economic efficiency is served by a close connection with the former colonial power. Thus Ivoiriens enjoy none of the heady wine so freely offered to the inhabitants of "revolutionary" African territories; but they are already more prosperous than their fellows and may reasonably hope in the near future to reap even more benefits from the skilful policies of M. Raphael Saller, the West Indian Minister of Finance. True, not all of them share the glittering rewards grasped so eagerly by the educated *élite*, but a certain amount of prosperity is beginning to rub off on

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the mass of the population. The crowds in Abidjan are far better dressed than those in Dakar, and in the villages around the city one sees straw and mud huts being pulled down and replaced by brick houses. What has been done is considerable, if not quite "an African Switzerland."[3]

What of the tribal plots of the young men in a hurry? Political unrest leading to "incidents" could stop the flow of investment and turn Abidjan from a boom town to a backwater. Young men in a hurry exist all over Africa, products of secondary education for whom there are no jobs, products of university education who expect to be "Ministers at thirty" like their predecessors, the generation that took over at Independence. The presence of educated young men dissatisfied with their opportunities gives a dangerous built-in instability to political life. Modernisation has transformed, but not eliminated, the antagonism between age groups that characterised tribal society. In the Ivory Coast a movement of "young Turks" claiming their place in the sun from the *croulants* of thirty-five who now occupy it could make use of all the emotive slogans of nationalism: *"Down with neo-colonialism!"* or *"Out with the foreigners!"* As a barrier there are the security services, and the political skill of Félix Houphouet-Boigny. Will they be enough? Perhaps not; but it will ultimately be the worse for the whole of Africa if the most politically daring attempt that has yet been made on that continent to bring a country out of underdevelopment should break down into anarchy and atavism.

THE FLIGHT from Abidjan to Douala calls at Accra, Lomé, Cotonou, and Lagos. All along the coast are the sandbanks and the coastal lagoons in which the great rivers lose themselves as they reach the sea. Accra: pictures of Nkrumah and no whisky in the airport bar. Lomé: German tourist posters on the walls (Mainz *"die tausendjährige Stadt"* and the castle of Neuschwannstein—are the Togolese, coming from an ex-German colony, supposed to respond?). Notices claiming that "if one has not seen Togoland, one has not seen Africa." But who has seen Africa? A small African girl plays with a white doll. A symbol? Does not African politics consist of Africans playing with European toys and Europeans (or Americans) playing with African ones?

We take off again only to come down at Cotonou, and troop once more into the same well-built French airport to be found everywhere in French West Africa. In the Lagos transit lounge the difference between French and English-speaking Africa immediately becomes apparent in small things. Cleaner lavatories, but no ice for the drinks. Plenty of Africans in blazers and grey flannels, and buses like those at London airport (really quite unnecessary, as it is only a few yards to the transit buildings, but the complicated procedures of Heathrow reign in all their horror). On to Douala munching Air Afrique's cold roast beef for the second time today. The formalities to enter Cameroon take some time: civil war has been going on until quite recently. A Zambian who speaks no French is held up by the authorities, and I have to interpret. Waiting for the hotel room that Air Afrique has failed to book.

THE PLANE to Yaoundé. Soon the forest gives way to meadowy country, very green with scattered trees. Behind it the hills rise steeply: one flies over them to get to Chad, and the five-hour journey to Maroua, Garoua, and Fort Lamy runs partly along the line of the future Transcameroonian railway (Douala is already linked to Yaoundé). Yaoundé is built on small hills and ridges straggling in all directions: everywhere flowering shrubs and trees. But this is only an administrative capital, and the main street looks a little like a Hollywood set for Dodge City. Only the lepers are out of place (though their deformities seem less weird than those in Dakar). The principal square is dominated by an enormous cathedral standing at the top of a flight of semi-circular steps; it is built in a style which must owe something to local tradition with a great pointed roof whose eaves nearly reach to the ground on either side—like an enlarged long-hut. Up on the hill is a cantonment of official buildings and the Presidential palace. It is there that one goes to see ministers. If one sees ministers....

TALK WITH *X.*, a Frenchman who knows the country well. He is pessimistic about its chances

[3] The Ivory Coast's present Gross National Product per capita stands at about 200 dollars—the figure reached by countries such as Portugal and Greece in the early 1950s. Since 1960 the rate of economic growth has averaged 6·5 per cent, while the increase of population has been stabilised at 2·5 per cent. In 1963 the Ivory Coast had an export surplus of 15 billion CFA francs. This is an impressive record—particularly since the country was not among the most highly developed African territories immediately after the war. In 1948 the number of children at school did not reach 5 per cent. Now it is 42 per cent, and the Ivory Coast has overtaken countries such as Senegal and Dahomey. Not that such figures invariably denote the presence of a progressive and popular government. (The highest proportion of children at school in Francophone Africa is to be found in President M'Ba's Gabon (85 per cent).

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of development. It is a paradox that everyone I spoke to outside Cameroon seemed to think of it as having "the best potential future" of any ex-French colony. *X.* does not agree. "They just can't run things here—and tribalism doesn't make matters easier. The rebellion that's been going on is purely due to the Bamilekes wanting to govern the country themselves. Of course Ahidjo is firmly in power at the minute. He has managed to strike a balance between the tribes, and his majority in the presidential elections recently was so large as to be embarrassing. But there would be trouble if he died. The real point about this country is that Cameroonians don't like working. Not like the Nigerians...."

Y., a foreign diplomat: "Don't attach too much importance to the Bamileke rebellion. It is nearly over. There are still one or two heads on stakes in the villages and barricades around them, but nothing to what it was. The problem here is development. But the President keeps on changing ministers when they look like being too successful. Ahidjo is a statesman but he always has the first and last word, and no one dares express any different opinion from his in the council of ministers. Any minister who did so would soon be out.... Ahidjo is a Moslem from the north, but he has sense enough to realise that he must come to terms with the Catholics. Monseigneur Zoa, the Archbishop of Yaoundé, is a remarkable man—a synthesis of Rome and Africa. He has great political influence, but doesn't use it. He and the President meet on equal terms...."

Back to the hotel which is full of African families, and the children whoop and scream, while the parents take off in vast new cars. In the show-cases in the hall are examples of African craftsmanship including large spiders in iron which, I gather, are Bamileke work. There are also wooden panels where the spider occurs again as a motif and which show kings hanging their subjects, warriors on horseback spearing foot-soldiers, and lions eating people. In general the African crafts in Dakar and Abidjan seemed inferior and too obviously mass-produced, but these objects strike a more authentic note. The spiders, if one can bear them, and the panels, if one could transport them, would be worth having. Even the spears have a more business-like air about them than elsewhere, looking as though they could be used (or just had been).

Who are the kings in the panels and did they hang men from trees? Here one feels the lack of a knowledge of African history. But what is black African history, and how are we to know it? Certainly there is a past, but light seems to be shed on it through contacts with other peoples and other civilisations—the Arabs and Berbers from the north, the Portuguese and Arabs on the east coast, the European slavers and colonisers on the West. Even the ancient empires of the Sudan—Ghana, Kanem, the Songhai empire of Gao and Mali—are known to us from Arab historians and were deeply affected by the Islamic civilisation at the other end of the Saharan trade routes. The African climate has left little in the way of records and monuments, and oral traditions are the best evidence of how Africans have viewed their own history. What one reads of the bygone civilisations south of the Sahara seems remote and strange—more remote perhaps than Sumer or Akkad. Regrettably we know past civilisations only by what they leave to us. Those which leave only a name we respect and pass by.

Interview with the Cameroonian diplomat (and former Foreign Minister) M. Balla. He quotes Descartes to demonstrate that the more complex concept (African unity) always proceeds from the less complex (regional organisations). He is a strong partisan of OCAM and denounces Ghanaian interference in Cameroon with vigour. The government of Cameroon does not demand the expulsion of Cameroonian exiles from Ghana: "That would be contrary to international law." But it does insist that subversive publications should not be supplied from Accra and that Dr. Nkrumah should cease to harbour a Cameroonian rebel as an attaché to his retinue. All this was apparently pointed out by a recent good-will mission to Ghana, but without much result. (M. Balla smiles and hopes that his Cartesian spirit has not shocked my English pragmatism. I say that it has not.)

I then ask about the Congo, to which he replies: "There is great danger of Africa becoming a battleground for the great powers. For that reason outside intervention in the Congo must stop." Naturally he and everyone else dislike the mercenaries, but recognise that they must be replaced by something. Perhaps OCAM could send troops to keep order in the pacified areas (this leaves it unclear whether mercenaries are still to be used to pacify rebel-occupied areas). But, since the OAU did not accept the Cameroonian plan, they have let it drop for the moment. "No, there would be no objection *a priori* to Congo-Léopoldville or, for that matter, Nigeria joining OCAM."

M. Balla also says that Africans attach the greatest importance to the Rhodesian question. With regard to the Portuguese territories, he agrees that the situation there will probably evolve after Salazar's death, adding that, as a Catholic, he does not usually desire the death of anyone, but that in the case of Salazar....

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

REMARK made to a young European teacher: "But you're white. You must know what to do to stop old age. It's just that you don't want to tell us...." In his class one bright boy reads Marx and Lenin on the quiet. Another tells a story of a severed arm found on a tree which, when scratched, joins itself on to the body of the owner who suddenly appears.

A phrase spoken at a dinner-party here haunts me. "There's no such thing as love in Africa." Can this be true? Obviously not literally, but doesn't love in the Western sense ("love—an invention of the twelfth century," wrote Seignebos) presumably depend on a standard of living which provides leisure to become conscious of the fact that one is faced with another person and not merely an instrument of procreation or pleasure? In the excellent Cameroonian review *Abbia* (edited in French and English by M. Bernard Fonlon, the vice-minister of foreign affairs), I find this in an article by a Mill Hill Father (the Rev. Fr. J. Nielen): "Are there still parents in Africa who spend money on their children without calculating how much they will get in return?..." And again: "Africa seems hidden under a dark cloud of fear caused by the harshness of the Big Men...." The harshness of much of African life is mitigated only by the bonds of kinship, and one wonders whether those who talk glibly of "abolishing tribalism" always realise the consequences in terms of social disintegration.

EASTER DAY. There is High Mass at the cathedral. The crowds swarm round it. They stand on the steps and climb on the roof of the porch to look through the windows. Later on the road out of the town there are little girls and boys coming from their first Communion, dancing all the way back to their villages in their white clothes surrounded by relatives and drummers. After lunch, they are still there, swaying their hips and waving their hands. The drums—which one hears a lot in Yaoundé—have a curiously unresonant note. They are wooden—and they sound wooden.

NIGER and Upper Volta have been in town. (How much easier to call Presidents, like bishops, after their territorial titles!) Niger was presumably in an unfriendly mood towards Ghana after just failing to be assassinated by a Sawaba hand-grenade at the Tabaski sacrifice. I go down to the station to watch them depart on the very narrow-gauge railway, and hope, for the sake of the Cameroon Republic's prestige, that there won't be a derailment today. The Presidential band, very smart in green tunics and red caps, is playing away like mad at French marches and what I can only suppose are the respective national anthems. Soon the diesel train pulls out with police hanging on to it at every hangable point; with a noise of sirens and preceded by jeep-loads of gendarmes the President returns to his palace up the hill. Some of the crowd who have been brandishing placards reading *"Comité de base de la Briquetterie"* and beating drums now break into applause. M. Ahidjo lifts an ostentatiously bored hand as much as to say, "I don't need to thank you. It was I who arranged for you to be there...."

CAMEROONIAN NOTES:

Five or six women of the same tribe all dressed in the same black and yellow material walking down the street together like wasps. One had accosted me at night on the road swinging her hips—*"Msieu, Msieu."* (Surprising when one considers the penalties.)

"The Bamileke are bursting out of their land. That is the great drama here...."

"The philosophy of aid is all wrong. Only the Germans supervise it decently...."

A showing of the film of *Hamlet* is offered to the diplomatic corps. The chauffeurs are also admitted, and the pile of bodies at the end is greeted with shouts of *"C'est mauvais ça!"*

Three impressions: (*1*) The present régime is an unstable coalition which will last only as long as the President's life. (*2*) The country's prosperity will therefore depend on his not dying in the near future, and on the formation of cadres over the next ten years, since the Cameroonian mixed economy requires complicated decisions efficiently taken. (*3*) The future will also be greatly affected by what happens in the neighbouring countries. If the Nigerian Federation falls to pieces, the effect on Cameroon will be catastrophic.

YAOUNDÉ—FORT LAMY with stops at at N'Gaoundéré and Garoua (President Ahidjo's fief). The mountainous scenery is like the American west. There are the same misshapen rock formations, the same flattened abrupt hills. The atmosphere is like a breath from a furnace door. The hot wind, the *Hamattan*, is blowing from the east, and there is a smell of burning in the air. The sky is quite clear, and, in the west, its colour is a deep greenish blue. From one small patch of cloud the lightning flickers in long, jagged streaks....

In Fort Lamy. There are, once again, the little fires in the ditches and the trees with grey, silvery leaves. The houses along the banks of the river Chari have something faintly oriental about their architecture, and the cathedral looks like a distorted mosque. It is

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hot by midday—so hot that to walk three hundred yards has one dodging to and from patches of shade. The roads, called after officers who took part in General LeClerc's march to the north in 1940–41, are deep in red dust. In the square before the cathedral men squat and play a complicated game with pebbles on a board traced with a finger. There are not many people about. This is "the European quarter"—in what is purely an administrative and garrison post. There is also a *medina* and a *quartier des évolués* (still called that!). Just outside is the airport, one of the biggest in Africa where the DC-8s land on their way to Douala and Léopoldville.

A FOREIGN DIPLOMAT: "Transport's the great problem here. Do you realise that Tchad imports fuel through Douala, Brazzaville, Lagos and Port Sudan? Six months of the year you can't move on the roads. The result is that the country falls apart. Fort Lamy is cut off from the rest of it except by air.... This is serious because President Tombelbaye and his régime represent essentially the rule of the Saras of the south over the nomadic Arabic-speaking peoples of the north, who have always considered them as inferiors. Now they are ruled by Sara prefects. Near the Sudanese border, whole villages have moved over into the Sudan. Everyone in the east and north listens to the attacks of Cairo radio on the government of Tchad, and there is a Tchadian liberation movement in Khartoum.... The French withdrawal leaves three companies of the Tchad army doing the job that two or three thousand troops did before.... President Tombelbaye's rivals? They are either in jail or exile—no doubt, a considerable waste of talent in a place like Tchad.... There are only two Tchadian doctors. One is Foreign Minister and the other is in prison...."

Slow, hot walk to the Ministry of Information. I find that it has already moved into the "new government building" that everyone talks about: very much an effort in the modern French colonial style. There is no one about except for workmen carrying desks and tables and carpets. I knock on doors at random and eventually find myself face to face with a French press counsellor to the Présidence who at once takes the initiative by remarking (I need hardly say) that I have come at "a bad time" and that it is "always better to write first." But he promises to do his best. It is no use trying the President; he is just back from a trip; he will see no one for a week afterwards. What about the foreign minister? I had better come back tomorrow; there is a cabinet meeting all today.

Talk with old French resident who pooh-poohs notion of trouble with Arabic-speaking population. They cannot understand the Arabic of the Cairo radio. But nonetheless won't there be trouble in ten years time when the Arabs who go to school want the jobs now held by Saras?

The French residents in Tchad often seem to be rather tactless. There was the occasion on which a Tchadian minister was turned out of the French bookshop here on the grounds that "You Africans never buy any books!" It also seems that certain French officials had taken the side of the northern peoples against the Sara régime. For a short time the Tchad government appeared to be going towards a break with France, but it soon became clear that the poverty of Tchad and the threat to its existence from the Arab world were too great for any such policy to be possible. New agreements between France and Tchad were signed in Paris, and soon the country had taken on the role of communication centre in the new dispositions of French troops in central Africa. Tchad cannot do without France, and the French residents in Tchad will be undisturbed for a long time to come provided they keep their tongues in their cheeks.

Just behind the hotel flows the Chari, a lazy river full of the big fish, the *capitaine* that forms the basis of much local cooking. The Chari flows to lose itself in Lake Tchad, gradually evaporating as the Sahara moves southwards. In the garden that reaches down to the river there are paddocks with gazelles and monkeys. Outside the town—that is, ten minutes in a car moving at fifteen miles an hour over the dust roads—there is nothing: an endless plain of scrub reaching away to infinity with, here and there, a small group of huts with pointed roofs surrounded by a high wattle fence, and the sun and the shimmering haze on the horizon. Five hundred miles to the north is the first high ground, the Tibesti mountains. (Those names....)

TALK ABOUT Tchad's economy with M. Adolphe Niguimbaye, director of the Plan. "Our first move for modernisation in the villages was a campaign to get the villagers to use ploughs. We've distributed over five thousand ploughs. Before that they just scratched the surface." He is keen on the idea of a Transcameroon railway to reach the cotton-growing regions around Fort Archambault, as this area would not be accessible to a railway link between Fort Lamy and the Nigerian railways. (N.B. this question is a complex one politically. There is a good deal of evidence that French officials are trying to prevent a railway link with Nigeria, in the same way as, up to now, they have prevented a direct air link between Fort Lamy and Kano.)

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Transport is perhaps the greatest of Tchad's problems. There is no question of river transport (the Chari is too shallow); the expense of building metalled roads over the distances involved is far too great. But perhaps there is oil in the north.... Now the reduction in French troops means that it will be difficult to balance the budget owing to new military expenses.

THE "NEW BUILDING" is getting an official opening. A band, two lines of Presidential guards with drawn sabres on either side of a red carpet, and a small crowd including most of the French or Tchadian celebrities of Fort Lamy all wait for the President's arrival. The *tirailleurs* are very magnificent with baggy red trousers, fezes and green facings on their tunics: like something out of *Beau Geste*. The building itself is on the banks of the Chari and has the air of a ship: at one end there is a kind of prow ending in a balcony from which President Tombelbaye can harangue the multitude when he so feels inclined, and the small windows—small on account of the heat—look like portholes. Presently there is a wailing of sirens and the President's Mercedes arrives from the Presidency (approximately twenty-five yards away). The sabres swing to the salute, the band strikes up an indeterminate tune of the French military variety, and the President, after inspecting the guard, arrives in front of the waiting microphone. He makes a short speech about Tchad's progress and Franco-Tchadian friendship, of which this building is (in some way or other) a proof. When the speech is over we all go into the building which now is covered with red carpets. Drinks are served. Tchadian officials show relatives and friends their new desks (and French advisers are busy mentally allocating the space differently). A nice building, but it is hard not to wonder what scenes it will witness. Will there never be blood on the stairs? Or will the reigning president, unlike Sylvanus Olympio in Togo, suceeed in making his escape to the American embassy? This is morbid speculation, but it would be naïve to think that these wide gleaming desks, this humming air-conditioned coolness, these polished wooden doors will always remain as undisturbed as they seem now. Between the precarious balance that one feels in Tchad and the calm of administrative furniture there is a gulf fixed.

TCHAD is interesting politically as the frontier where black Africa meets the Arab world. It is also the state—apart from the Sudan—where the tensions between the two are at their greatest. Potentially, indeed, the tension is there all over West Africa. A Frenchman said to me in Dakar: "You must remember that our whole policy here is not so much directed against Russia or China as against Algeria and Egypt." But fear of pressure from the North is shared by many West Africans even when they are officially Moslem. In recent negotiations with France, Houphouet-Boigny insisted that Niger should be covered by a military guarantee on the grounds that it was "a buffer-state between us and Algeria." I have never heard such violent attacks on the Arab League and Nasser's Egypt as in Tchad. For the country could all too easily be torn apart and destroyed by a dissidence in the Arabic-speaking North. Yet the distrust of Arab intentions is not only due to political circumstance: it is due to history also and the clash between different ways of life. Tshombe's attacks on Arab "slave-traders" had immense success (so everyone says), and one of the unavowed aims of OCAM is to get the North African countries out of the OAU. I remember the wife of an Egyptian ambassador in an African capital remarking that her husband used to come home and talk about "We Africans...." But then the children would burst into tears and say "But, daddy, we don't want to be Africans...."

TCHAD: the antithesis of a geographical expression which an accident of history has endowed with a government, bureaucracy, and a growing national consciousness. A country for which it is so hard to see a future economically or politically except one miraculously created by a handful of men in the face of enormous difficulties. Where the ancient is rooted in a geography that the modern seems powerless to change and can at best ignore for a little while. A fierce, barren country. One remembers the smell of it and the feel of it and how it needs help. Perhaps this is the truest Africa.

AND IS AFRICA itself only a geographical expression too? What can be said of it that is true even of all the multifarious Africas squeezed between the Sahara and the Bight of Benin? In its shifting political sands even Nigeria, which had seemed to be finding its way, has now faltered; the pattern of coup and counter-coup gives a monotonous regularity to contemporary West African history. Sometimes it must seem even to optimists that Africa is bound for the dispiriting future of 19th-century Latin America.

Africa needs our help—that, at least, is certain. Africa can only achieve development and modernisation through some sacrifice of the political euphoria that was the most immediate consequences of Independence—that is clear

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enough. But some states fall outside even these generalisations. What remedy is there for countries whose resources are utterly insufficient for their needs—a Senegal or a Mali? If these are to prosper, a wisdom and selflessness will be required from West African statesmen for which there are few European precedents. All African countries need stability and moderation in their politics, and those that are least likely to get them need them most. The politicians and officials who work honestly and competently to this end deserve our deep respect, for, without them, it would be all too easy to dislike African élites and easier still to do them injustice. As for those who go in for corruption and the bullying of inferiors: humanly speaking, we owe them the utmost rigour of compassion—politically speaking, they will be judged by the peasants and artisans whom they misgovern.

Africa will continue to be enmeshed in a political web constantly woven and unravelled. What can be saved will be by the example of its just men and the impetus of its own forces of change. How that change will end is hard to foresee, but the metamorphosis at present under way is at least authentically African. Provisionally Africans are masters of their fate in the small margin of decision which is all most governments have left to them these days. That they want more is irrelevant. For the first battle that has to be won is not one against "colonialism" or "reaction"—it is the battle against environment: first against geography, then against habits and custom. But it will be like moving mountains. For all the importance of aid, neither Europe nor America can live this experience for Africa. In history there is no substitute for failure. Throughout a vast continent the forests, the rivers, and the deserts, disease, superstition, and brutality await their true conquerors who, in defeating them, will confirm a victory over themselves.

Anthony Hartley

Head of a Snowdrop

After the north-east wind I carried
A snowdrop indoors. Taut as a bead
And bright, it lay in a bottle-top,
Nothing but petal from the wound up.

Its roots, stem, were still out of doors; strange
That away from them it could so change,
Normally opening into flower,
Wide as a primrose in one warm hour.

Human fingernails and hair move less
After death and lack naturalness.
Births after death—young Macduff—have such
Horror they can be used by a witch.

Anti-vivisectionists show man
Keeping dogs' heads alive, yapping even.
Schoolboys studying the Stuarts laugh
About Charles talking with his head off.

And I have this freak on my own hearth
Making me think about roots and birth
By false analogies and ignore
Its fulfilled purpose: an open flower.

Patricia Beer

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Open Letter to President Tito

By Mihajlo Mihajlov

VERY RESPECTED COMRADE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA: I take the liberty of writing this open letter to you because I consider it my duty to give a public answer to a very harsh statement which you made a few days ago and which, directly or indirectly, refers to me and to people who share my opinions.

As I am not a member of the League of Communists, your statements as Secretary-General of the Party can have only an academic interest for me; but as you are at the same time President of the Republic of which I am a citizen, I cannot remain indifferent to the almost unveiled threats to those people whose way of thought you have defined as "Djilasist."

As I clearly and openly take a stand in defence of such a way of thought—and as the world press has lately paid attention to the action I have initiated, *i.e.* the launching of a legal opposition newspaper, of a philosophical and political, social and cultural character, the first of its kind in the socialist world (which is perfectly legitimate under the laws of Yugoslavia and the new Constitution)—your statement, addressed to the West, is in the first instance a threat to me and those who share similar opinions.

According to *Borba* of 6 and 7 July you said in a speech to the representatives of the veterans' organisation on 6 July, at Brioni:

> I notice various deformations, and many individuals who are inimical to our social organisation and who dream of something else. We must stop the destructive, anti-socialist activities of these people who are threatening our community....
>
> I read what is being written abroad about the decisions of the 4th session of our Central Committee. There have been some positive comments, but many more are negative. The comments appear to be positive, but in fact harp on what Djilas wanted. There is talk of liberalisation and of victory over dogmatism. This is not correct.... We will not be liberal... to various negative manifestations and influences from the West, to Western ideologies being imported here. It has been said that this would be a good thing; that in this way Yugoslavia would finally achieve what Djilas wanted and that, in the end, the Party itself would disappear. Now this is where the mistake is being made....
>
> We are in the process of founding a true democracy, where man is free. We cannot allow men to live in fear. He who is opposed to the fulfilment of socialism should fear, but not so our good comrades and honest citizens who, together with us, and in good faith, are engaged in the task of building our socialist society. These citizens cannot be allowed to live in fear. Let the enemies of our country live in fear, all those who believe that we shall go back on what we have achieved, those who wish to harm our socialist task and our Party, our League of Communists. This is my answer to those people in the West....

I do not wish to remind you that Marxism was introduced in our country, and in Russia, from the West. However, the idea of democratic socialism as opposed to one-party (and that means totalitarian) socialism did not originate in the ranks of the so-called class enemies in the West, of whom not even a democratic socialist could approve, but from within the socialist milieu, and that not only in our country. This idea received a great impulse after the revelations of the terrible experience of Stalinism. Stalinism showed that a whole society can be pushed into a blind alley where one-party rule is made to appear inseparable from socialism. Opposition to the exclusive monopoly of the Communist Party in social and political life does not mean opposition to socialism. In fact, it is rather the other way round. This is why nearly all West European communist parties have turned against one-party rule, as *every* one-party rule is just a species of Stalinism. It is due exclusively to you that Yugoslav one-party socialism has attained a form which is so humane, if compared, for instance, to its Soviet counterpart. Today, in Yugoslavia, the guarantor of this humanism is not the League of Communists, but you personally, as has been shown at the recent plenum of the Central Committee of the League of Communists.

WHEN YOU SAY that the state security services should not be above the state, I completely

MIHAJLO MIHAJLOV *is the young Yugoslav writer and teacher whose remarkable reportage, "Moscow Summer 1964," brought him into conflict with the censors and then with the police. We published an account of the case ("Moscow Summer, Belgrade Winter," by Anatole Shub) in the June 1965* ENCOUNTER. *On 28th July, Mr. Mihajlov's flat was searched by the police and he was later questioned by an investigating judge.*

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

agree with you. But I also consider that the League of Communists, an organisation which represents only 6 per cent of the total population of this country, should also not be above society and above the laws and Constitution of this country. In spite of the great services rendered in the past, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia cannot have any monopoly in the fulfilment of socialism.

The legalisation, within the context of Yugoslavia's laws and Constitution, of a way of thought differing from yours and that of the League of Communists does not lead to the elimination of your way of thought—just as the creation of another democratic and socialist party does not lead to the elimination of the League of Communists. An idea or a movement can only grow in an atmosphere of free, public, and legal competition of opinions. This also applies to Marxism and communism. As history shows, the people have always, as far as circumstances have permitted them, freely chosen the progressive alternative. The very proof of this is the victory of the Yugoslav Communist Party over the bourgeois parties during the war and after the liberation. Since the present Yugoslav Constitution guarantees freedom of opinion to every citizen of this country, the appearance of a newspaper independent of the League of Communists—and the foundation of an independent social and political movement—can in no way harm the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. That is to say, if you and the League have any faith in this country.

AS NEITHER I NOR THOSE who share my beliefs identify ourselves with the enemies of socialism and of our country (in spite of your harsh words), we will not live in fear. In order not to be compelled to publicise our opinions solely through the medium of the Western press, and so that henceforth you may not be compelled to address yourself to "those people in the West," but directly to us here (whose contact with the Western press has only been due to the fact that up to now we could not address ourselves openly to Yugoslav public opinion), we, a group of a few dozen from every part of Yugoslavia, shall meet in Zadar from 10 to 13 August and hold a legal meeting to launch an independent, democratic, and socialist periodical, of a philosophical and political, social and cultural nature, intended to become in the long run the nucleus of a democratic and socialist social-political movement under the laws and the Constitution of Yugoslavia. Obviously, I need not remind you that articles 39 and 40 of the new Yugoslav Constitution explicitly guarantee to all citizens (and not merely members of the League of Communists) the freedoms of thought, opinion, assembly, expression, and association.

You and the League of Communists obviously can stop all this by illegal police measures, but should you do so, you would show world opinion that your actions do not correspond to your statements on democracy, legality, and constitutionalism. The outcome of our meeting at Zadar will answer the question: is the League of Communists above the laws and the Constitution? Is Yugoslavia the private property of the Communist Party? Or is it a genuinely socialist country in which legality and the Constitution are upheld? In short: can a country which communists have been ruling for more than 20 years be also a country in which the rule of law is observed?

I HOPE THAT you will understand why I have had to adopt this means of making a public reply to you. Obviously, I do not believe that this letter of mine will be published in the Yugoslav press, but only in the West. But this just goes to show that, today, ideas are exported to the West from socialist countries, and not the other way round, as you seem to think. The most obvious instance of this is the books of Milovan Djilas.

With respect, I remain your devoted

Mihajlo Mihajlov

Zadar, 11 July 1966.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Fairlie & the New York Times

THE WITLESS ATTACK of Henry Fairlie on the editorial page of the New York *Times* [ENCOUNTER, June] prompts me to express a sense of genuine shock that you as a responsible editor would allow your magazine to be used as a vehicle for statements that you must have known were untrue. At best they are ill-informed; at worst they are slanderous; in either case they are malicious.

If Fairlie really finds the New York *Times* editorial page "the most unintelligible" in England or America, of course he has a right to say so and say it in your columns—although in saying so he is merely displaying a stupidity that must be unique among our readers. But if, as I believe, he is not stupid and is merely using this device to cover his disagreement with certain editorial positions of the *Times* that he understands full well, then such lack of integrity has no place in the pages of ENCOUNTER.

The *Times* can fairly be criticised for its editorial policies by those who dislike them; but you know as well as I do that no reader of the *Times* in recent years can in honesty or reason accuse us, as Fairlie does, of "a complete absence of serious conviction." As you must know—and as Fairlie must know—the *Times* has in recent years expressed its "serious conviction" vigorously and unequivocally on innumerable controversial public issues—whether on Viet Nam or McCarthy, on civil rights or civil liberties; on China policy or tax policy. Fairlie's statement to the contrary is untrue and you must have known it to be just that.

Perhaps you as editor can explain to me what Fairlie means by his strangely constructed phrase: "the editorial opinion of the New York *Times*, which is the opinion only of its *strangely constructed* editorial board" (italics added). Just what is strange about our editorial board? If Fairlie were genuinely puzzled by it, why did he not get in touch with me to ask how it was "constructed"? Even if Fairlie is as ignorant as he seems to be, you are not.

Furthermore, he insinuates (footnote on p. 78) that the *Times* news and editorial departments co-ordinate their policies. As you are surely sophisticated enough to know, this is another absurd falsehood. The news department of the *Times* is not consulted on editorial policy, nor is the editorial department consulted on news policy. This complete separation of powers is standard practice at the *Times* and has been for many years.

Incidentally, Fairlie's effort to ridicule a paragraph in a recent *Times* editorial on the exceedingly complicated New York State reapportionment issue only reveals that he himself was totally confused about the matter and has not the slightest idea of the relationship between Federal and state constitutions.

As Fairlie said of another critic: "He indulged —it is a pleasant pastime—in the kind of bogus analysis of the newspaper's content which is too often allowed to pass for serious criticism." That is exactly what his own critique of the *Times* editorial page is: bogus, superficial, ill-informed and distorted, from beginning to end.

The only surprising thing is that the editor of ENCOUNTER allowed it "to pass for serious criticism."

JOHN B. OAKES,
Editor of the Editorial Page

The New York Times,
Times Square,
New York City

[Henry Fairlie will be replying to this letter and the other recent correspondence about his article in the next ENCOUNTER.—*Ed.*]

All Souls & Lord Franks

THE GENERAL philosophy of the Franks Report and its view of Oxford are very far from my own, yet the fact remains that, however radical my critique of All Souls may have been [ENCOUNTER, March], this generally moderate and respectable Report has endorsed a great deal of it. The Establishment smites the Establishment—a recurring paradox of English history. Confronted by All Souls, Lord Franks reacted like a 19th-century factory inspector investigating conditions in an industrial slum; lucid and impartial, he recognised a scandal and proposed drastic reform without questioning the foundations of the system itself. It was the best that could have been expected. The factory inspectors looked hopefully to Parliament; paragraph 350 of the Report suggests that the University intervene in future to vet and if necessary veto All Souls' plans. This is a shattering, and as far as I know unprecedented, humiliation for a single Oxford College. Already cries of pain and rage have been heard, for no one likes to hear that he can no longer keep his own house in order.

I had intended to comment on the two replies to my article which have so far appeared in ENCOUNTER. However, Professor Max Beloff's recent reaction to the Franks Report seems to me to be of much greater significance, and I shall therefore deal primarily with that. But, as regards Professor Lionel Butler's very sober piece, I can only say that whatever Professor Butler may know about the problems of accommodating graduate students, he is not in a position to know or interpret the internal history of All Souls in the 1960s: in this respect it is no doubt more useful to work in Oxford without being a friend of the Warden of All Souls, than to work in St. Andrew's and be a friend of the Warden.

Professor Beloff's reaction is depressing and insular. What is at stake in All Souls is not the classless society but merely the bourgeois revolution;

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington, D.C.

MANY *foreign diplomats have quietly stopped accepting invitations to the Moroccan Embassy, until last month the gayest place in Washington.*

The Ambassador of one Latin American country tells how he narrowly escaped a disastrous setback to his career. He was a guest at the Moroccan belly-dance party, and his picture was taken when the dancer had whirled one of her gauzy scarves like a turban around his head.

This picture was to have appeared on Newsweek*'s cover. However the magazine changed its plan after the shooting of James Meredith in the South. Instead, a picture of the Rev. Martin Luther King, the Negro civil rights leader, was on the cover.*

Some Arab diplomats claim that this publicity is all part of "a Zionist plot." DAILY MAIL

London

THE USE *of the expression "Christ!" in the report of an interview in the* Sun *lowers the standards of journalism, the Press Council says in an adjudication issued today.*

In reporting an interview with Mr. Robert Robinson, of the B.B.C., Miss Susan Barnes wrote: "He said when we met for lunch, 'Some people I respect wrote that I seemed to be at odds with the programme. Christ! what do they mean?... I'm no different from what I've always been.'..."

The complaint was that the editor of the Sun *should not have allowed "Christ!" to appear in the article. It was bound to give offence—and ought to give offence—to every Christian reader. The editor of the* Sun *said that the intention was to let Mr. Robinson express himself in his own way. That would not have been achieved if the newspaper had tried to censor his language.* THE TIMES

Washington, D.C.

A FEDERAL OFFICIAL *yesterday called for a halt to the spread of "federalese" and a return to plain English in the government. He demanded an end to "timid locutions and turgid rhetoric." The commissioner of labour statistics said in a report that the government needed better "verbal symbols." He announced a planned course for eight bureau writers to help them write clearly. It would include intensive "tutelage."*
NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE

New York

"THE *Soviet Government is interested in the question of how to begin the electrification of Russia." Thus speaks Joseph Stalin in* Kremlin Chimes, *a Soviet play with real-life characters that opened in Moscow in 1942. In the same play put on in New York last week by the visiting Moscow Art Theatre, Stalin doesn't say anything. He isn't there. The de-Stalinisation of Russia, begun in 1956, knocked him out of the play and left all the large pronouncements to Lenin.* NEW YORK TIMES

Jakarta

ONE *of history's most vicious massacres has not yet ended in Indonesia. More people have been slaughtered here during the past six years than in the entire Viet Nam war. It is impossible to give any precise figure of the number slain. One careful diplomatic estimate puts the total at 300,000. Others range higher.*

In February public beheadings were still being held outside Ende, capital of Flores Island. Each night soldiers were trucking groups of 20 or more P.K.I. suspects from the prison and out of town to decapitate them with heavy machetes. Sometimes heads were left on the ledge of a monument in Ende's central square. Decapitation is favoured because Indonesian animist tradition claims that if an enemy's head and body are buried apart his spirit cannot return.

Indonesians are gentle and instinctively polite but hidden behind their smiles is that strange Malay streak, that inner frenzied blood-lust which has given to other languages one of their few Malay words: amok. *This time an entire nation ran amok.* NEW YORK TIMES

London

THE BOOK *which a Tory M.P. wants banned on the grounds that it is pornographic was named in a Commons motion yesterday by six Labour M.P.s.*

Sir Charles Taylor, Conservative M.P. for Eastbourne, has refused to name the book because "I do not want to give it publicity." Earlier this week, during a short debate about the book, Sir Charles failed in an attempt to close the Commons public galleries so that he could read passages from it.

The Daily Mail omits the name of the book, not for censorial reasons but because the unnecessary antics of Sir Charles Taylor and Mr. Tom Driberg have now surrounded it with the kind of publicity that will encourage its sale for the wrong reasons. DAILY MAIL

London

MR. DRIBERG *and other Labour backbenchers name in a new Commons earlyday motion the title of the book anonymously debated on the adjournment motion on Wednesday. Sir Charles Taylor who unsuccessfully "spied strangers" in the adjournment debate, had refused to give the title of what he complained of as "this filthy and disgusting book."*

The motion takes the opposite view to Sir Charles Taylor's. It congratulates "the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Law Officers of the Crown on their decision not to prosecute the publishers [Calder & Boyars] of Last Exit to Brooklyn *by Hubert Selby, Jnr., but regrets that the main reason for this decision, as given by the Attorney General (Sir Elwyn Jones), was that such a prosecution might fail...."*
THE TIMES

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A. J. Ayer's recent piece on "Humanism and Reform" [ENCOUNTER, June] provides a revealing insight into some of the motives behind this diverse movement.

There is, it appears, a sense of the word in which a humanist is a person who does not believe in the existence of a god, and who therefore holds that the doctrines of religion such as the Christian are false. Such a person used to be called an atheist, and I would so describe myself. The humanist—in this sense—is concerned with discovery, with describing the world as he sees it. But this is far from all there is to it. According to Ayer, belief in humanism *logically* entails support for social reform, for "the welfare of mankind in general." This includes, it seems, support for the Labour Party, for a federated Europe, and for a view of education as the development of tolerance and a liberal attitude.

What is this logical entailment? It has nothing to do with logic as commonly understood—as formal or material implication, for example, unless a long series of suppressed value judgments is introduced to form what might charitably be called a sorites. In fact, its content is not logical form but Good Form. It is "insensitive" to announce an unpalatable truth without providing aid and comfort for those who will be affected by it. One even has a moral obligation not to do so.

I do not know how far Ayer carries this doctrine into professional practice—whether, for example, he feels it his duty to provide a supply of tranquillisers for philosophers whose beliefs he attacks at meetings of the Aristotelian Society. Nor do I know where the *moral* obligation comes from. Ayer's position is presumably still that the expression of a value judgment is not a proposition, so that the question of its truth or falsity does not arise. (*Language, Truth and Logic*, 2nd edition p. 22.) If this is so, it is equally true that there is no moral obligation of the kind he describes. But quite apart from the question of the consistency of Ayer's remarks with his general philosophical position, it is quite clear that there is no direct relation of logical entailment between the proposition that gods do not exist (or even the proposition that religion produces much unhappiness), and the proposition that social reform for the general welfare must be supported.

WHAT ARE THE policies which are supposed to be logically linked with the rejection of the supernatural? They are recommendations for advancing the general happiness and for the promotion of "values" of which Ayer happens to approve. Now all recommendations involve underlying assumptions about the state of affairs under discussion. You do not recommend anyone to defy the laws of gravitation, or to agitate for the repeal of Ohm's law. The world is so constituted that this would be pointless, however much we would like to float effortlessly through the air or halve our electricity bills. We know the facts, and we do not seek to alter them by propaganda. Human society is, in most important respects, infinitely more complex than the inanimate world. Its ways of working have scarcely begun to be studied. If the humanist's primary concern is with the exposure of illusion, with discovering the facts, what he should therefore be recommending is the *study* of society. And from the general confusion in this field, there is one proposition which does appear to be unquestionably true. This is that the concept "the general welfare of mankind" is a vacuous one. Whether (like the concept of a god) we describe it as meaningless or simply as not exemplified in the world as we know it is beside the point here. There are only particular interests, some of which co-operate, some of which conflict, some of which are essentially independent of each other. Recommendation of any policy of "reform" always involves tacit, often unrecognised, adherence to particular social groups and the advancement of certain interests at the expense of others.

The humanist is, in fact, only very partially emancipated from the desire to see things as they are rather than as he would like them to be. One "meaning" has been destroyed; but instead of going on to recognise that things have no purpose or meaning (in the sense of an overall scheme in which everything has a rational place), he hastens to replace it with another equally illusory one. The religious overtones are in fact explicit—Ayer actually speaks of the humanist as "*preaching* [my italics] his doctrine." It is of course no new thing to be unable to face up to the full consequences of the discovery that life has no pattern. In recent times, it is perhaps Sartre whose ambivalence about this has taken the most surprising form. Since there is no grand design in life, existence is gratuitous and obscene and the proper reaction to it is nausea. The choice of words indicates that he does not really accept his discovery, in spite of his insistence that we make our own values. But to locate his substitute Absolute in the proletariat, in historical inevitability and (in spite of his differences with it) French Marxism, is to be breath-takingly inconsistent. The humanists have at least avoided this mistake, although their reformist policy is only marginally more intellectually respectable.

HOW DIRECTLY the present-day position descends from that of F. C. S. Schiller or the American pragmatists who preceded him I do not know. There is evidently a close connection with modern positivism, and it is interesting that William James claimed as humanists such men as Mach, Hertz and Ostwald, all of whom anticipated many of the main tenets of the logical positivism of thirty years ago. The strong conformist trend in positivistic thinking, the reluctance (often denied, but none the less quite general) to seek out and criticise the social and moral assumptions built into ordinary language, has presumably been a strong influence impelling the humanists towards facile acceptance of current "liberal" shibboleths and away from objective enquiry and criticism.

If progress in culture is to be equated with increase in objectivity, then humanism, with its woolly-minded humanitarianism, is to be resisted as an anti-cultural force.

NOEL HUSH

University of Bristol

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MR. HUSH is quite right in saying that the rejection of the supernatural does not in itself entail a commitment to social reform. I never supposed that it did. The position which I took to be characteristic of most contemporary humanists was that having recognised the necessary fact that life can have no other meaning than what one succeeds in giving it, they also thought it desirable that the majority of people should achieve this success without resorting to religious belief. I also credited them with a moral outlook from which it would follow that if they thought this end desirable they should do what they could to make its realisation possible. Mr. Hush may not share this moral outlook but his implication that it cannot be exemplified in the pursuit of clear and concrete objectives is simply false.

Mr. Hush's own high-sounding phrase that progress in culture is to be equated with increase in objectivity loses something of its effect when it is seen that what he means by "objectivity" in this context is noting the various forms of social organisation without making any attempt to change them, however unjust or inefficient they may be. It is from the silly premise that this constitutes progress in culture that he draws his illiberal conclusion that humanism is an anti-cultural force.

A. J. AYER

London

L.S.E. Protest

MAY I as the person who organised the seminar meeting on the "One-party State" at the London School of Economics, so unfairly reported in your July issue, claim from you the right to inform your readers of the following.

At the meeting admission was confined to those known to be interested in the topic under discussion and therefore personally invited, mostly people who, like the editors of ENCOUNTER, attended in a personal capacity several meetings of my seminar, to staff at the LSE and post-graduates of the LSE. (*Your columnist's concern for the correct "diet for undergraduates" is thus quite irrelevant.*)

As at all seminars there was one main speaker, in this case, Professor Raymond Aron. The other speakers were invited to comment on what had been said rather than to deliver themselves of a well prepared rhetorical "set piece." It was a discussion between specialists before a larger audience than usual, because of the eminence of all the speakers.

I am personally deeply grateful to all the eight speakers who contributed so much with their expert knowledge and talent to make the meeting the success which indeed it was, to judge by the high numbers who attended throughout its four hours with unflagging interest. As for the content of the debate, your readers will be able to find in the quarterly of Comparative Politics, *Government and Opposition*, January 1967 issue, a précis of the main contributions and judge for themselves their value.

GHITA IONESCU

London School of Economics

Copyright Libraries

MR. FRANK KERMODE's reference to what he calls the "Copyright Libraries" is a wonderful example of generosity with other people's property.

The statutory copies which publishers have to provide are *not* a condition of copyright, but a capital tax which no other manufacturer or trader has to bear.

It is a burden which presses with peculiar severity upon publishers of scholarly work where editions are inevitably small and the margin of profit is exiguous.

To add yet further to an already unjust tax would be a most effective way of putting an end to the commercial publication of learned work.

(SIR) STANLEY UNWIN

Chairman, George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

London

Nabokov

MR. Vladimir Nabokov did, indeed, invent his Moris Fridberg, the impertinent reviewer of his translation of *Eugene Onegin* in New York's Russian-language *Novyi zhurnal*. I cannot comprehend how a man of Mr. Nabokov's exceptional linguistic sensitivity and apparently unlimited capacity for research could fail to discern in my name a distinctly non-Slavic ring and subsequently track down in some library its proper Latin spelling.

All this, however, does not detract from my admiration for Mr. Nabokov as a foremost comic writer of our generation, an impression that was significantly strengthened by my reading of his scholarly rebuke to his critics in the pages of ENCOUNTER [February].

MAURICE FRIEDBERG

Indiana University,
Bloomington, U.S.A.

INDEX TO VOLUME XXVI

The Index to Volume XXVI (January–June 1966) is now available and will be sent, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 25, Haymarket, London, S.W.1. Standing orders for future indexes can also be accepted.

Readers who have previously placed a standing order need not apply again, as they will receive the new index automatically. If the index is being sent to the wrong address or the service is no longer required, please let us know.

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Commentary

"An 'only in America' phenomenon . . .

If *Commentary* had not been blessed with extraordinarily good editors I suppose it would have turned into a worthy but lopsided publication, written by Jews and/or about Jews and/or about subjects of interest to Jews. Judaism is, and rightly, its central theme; yet . . . *Commentary* is concerned with all minorities, not least the Negro minority in the United States; with the Nazis and other forms of totalitarianism; with the pathology of the American South; with the politics, sociology and culture of urban life—in short, with most of the problems of our world."

Marcus Cunliffe
***Encounter*, August 1965**

We invite the readers of *Encounter* to try *Commentary*.

Please send COMMENTARY for one year at $9, £ 3/4/2, I enclose check or money order:

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY .....

COUNTRY .....

***Send to:* COMMENTARY, 165 East 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 USA, or COMMENTARY, Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company, 10 Mount Street, London W1.** EN-3

AUTHORS

Lewis Mumford writes: "... This memoir is a fragment from an unfinished autobiography: hence the fact that I shamelessly share the stage with Geddes. In a preceding chapter, still incomplete, I describe how I first, at eighteen, came upon Geddes' writings, when a student of biology at the City College of New York in 1914; and after showing the many ways in which his ideas and interests affected my own development, I go on to a detailed examination, both discriminating and appreciative, of his life and work. In the present chapter, the stress is not upon Geddes' great mind, but upon the immediate interplay of our two personalities, in the archetypal roles of master and disciple: a relationship whose seamier side was long ago revealed in Aristotle's constant sniping at Plato, after spending ten years under his tutelage...."

Wallace Kaufman is a young American writer. He teaches English at the University of North Carolina and has published stories in various magazines....

Alan Watkins was educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, where he was Chairman of the University Labour Club. He is 33, and at present the *Spectator*'s political correspondent. His article will appear in a symposium entitled *The Left*, edited by Gerald Kaufman, to be published by Anthony Blond....

Paul Blanshard is the author of *An Outline of the British Labour Movement* (1923); *American Freedom and Catholic Power* (1949); and *Communism, Democracy and Catholic Power* (1951)....

Terence Prittie is diplomatic correspondent of *The Guardian* and the author of *Germany Divided* and *Germans Against Hitler* (Hutchinson)....

Konrad Lorenz's new book, *On Aggression*, will be published this autumn by Methuen....

Cover design by **Colin Banks** and **John Miles.**

ENCOUNTER Magazine is published in London by Encounter Ltd. (25 Haymarket, S.W.1), in association with the International Publishing Corporation (33 Holborn, E.C.1).

ENCOUNTER BOOKS are published in association with Weidenfeld & Nicolson (20 New Bond Street, W.1).

MANUSCRIPTS for ENCOUNTER should be sent to 25 Haymarket, London, S.W.1, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope (English stamp) or international reply coupons, otherwise they cannot be returned. For subscription details see page 1.

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BECCLES

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Encounter Books

The Middle East and the West
BERNARD LEWIS

"The first of a series of *Encounter* studies and certainly the best short book on the Middle East. . . . It is a work of the highest level, combining elegance of style with an easy mastery of subject. This is probably one of the best books on any historical-political subject in recent years." *New York Review of Books.*
"All that such a book should be: lucid, concise, unencumbered with unnecessary detail, of a bare and authoritative simplicity, the fruit of great learning perfectly mastered." ELIE KEDOURIE in *The Listener.* 21s.

Russia and Germany
WALTER LAQUEUR

"Offers insights helpful to all who wish to understand twentieth-century totalitarianism. The book begins with the love-hate relationship between Russians and Germans in the nineteenth century: I have seen no better treatment in so short a space." HUGH SETON-WATSON in *The Spectator.*
"Opens new windows on to an important area of knowledge." RICHARD GOTT in *The Guardian.* 45s.

Half-way to the Moon
New Writing From Russia
Edited by PATRICIA BLAKE and MAX HAYWARD

"Irresistibly readable from beginning to end. . . . Only stubborn literary insularity can permit us to ignore these poems and stories, for they are sound writing in any language." *Times Literary Supplement.*
"This excellent anthology can, for all its political implications, be enjoyed as literature for its own sake. . . . To all this Miss Patricia Blake has supplied a sensitive, sympathetic, lively, intelligent and illuminating introduction." LEONARD SCHAPIRO in *The Spectator.* 30s.

Three Faces of Fascism
ERNST NOLTE

"Out of the many Fascist movements that flourished in Europe between the wars, Dr. Nolte has examined in detail the three he considers to have been the pilot movements. . . . He has accomplished his task with rare thoughtfulness and scholarly objectivity." SEFTON DELMER in the *Sunday Telegraph.*
"The most serious attempt at definition that has yet been made. It should be read by anyone interested in politics and sociology, and is certainly the synthesis from which future discussions of the subject will have to start." *The Economist.* 70s.

Encounter Books are published in association with

WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOK SOCIETY CHOICE

A. E. Hotchner's

PAPA HEMINGWAY

'What does a man care about?
Staying healthy. Working good.
Eating and drinking with his friends.
Enjoying himself in bed.
I haven't got any of them, Hotch.
Do you understand, goddam it?
None of them . . .'

It was Spring, 1961 . . .

And Hemingway—grim and gaunt after weeks of illness—was speaking to his close friend, A. E. Hotchner. Three months later, pursued by phantoms, his much-scarred adventurer's body in ruins, he blasted his life away with a shotgun.

This is Hemingway as Hotchner saw him during those last thirteen years. At close quarters. Clearly and with love. In bars and boats and cars. At home and on the bullfight circuit. Alone and with the incredible Hemingway entourage. In black moods (as he was increasingly) or exuberant.

This is Hemingway lacing past and present together with ripe talk. About books and money and other writers. About Paris and the real 'Brett'. About death and love. About wine and work and women and war. And the whole wide arc of his life.

And this is Hemingway in his 60s. Hemingway—the once hard-drinking sensualist—at odds, suddenly, with signs of his own mortality. At odds with age and a rebelling body. His world fast shrinking. Unable to write.

And so, on July 2 1961 at his home in Ketchum, Idaho, Hemingway died by his own hand. Here—by a literary miracle—he survives.

Illustrated with 16pp photographs *September 22* *36s*

WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED